

SOUTHEAST ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME II

Craig Tribal Association Hall
Craig, Alaska
March 15, 2017
9:00 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Bangs, Chair
Michael Douville
Donald Hernandez
Albert Howard
Cathy Needham, Acting Chair
Patricia Phillips
Steve Reifenstuhel
Robert Schroeder
Frank Wright
John Yeager

Regional Council Coordinator, DeAnna Perry

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Craig, Alaska - 3/15/2017)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I'd like to call the meeting to order. Okay. I just got here. My name is Mike Bangs. And we had a little trouble with the weather getting here, as well as some of you that are in the audience.

So what I want to do first is to acknowledge who's on the phone line that's listening in. Could you state your name and who you represent.

MR. OWEN: Good morning, Mike. This is Wayne Owen, with the U.S. Forest Service. I am the Regional Director for Fish, Wildlife and the Subsistence Programs. I'm in Juneau.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Wayne.

MR. OWEN: And it's still snowing.

MS. CELLARIUS: Good morning. This is Barbara Cellarius at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. I am going to be on and off the phone this morning, but during the agency reports either this afternoon or tomorrow morning, I do have a report to give. And I'm in Copper Center.

MS. DEBENHAM: Good morning. This is Rosalie Debenham. I work for the Bureau of Indian Affairs as a fish and wildlife biologist and I am currently in Juneau.

MS. PHILLIPS: Good morning. This is Patricia Phillips. I'm calling from Pelican, 99832. I'm a Regional Council Member.

Thank you.

MR. WRIGHT: Hi. This is Frank Wright. I'm in Hoonah. Regional Council.

MR. HOWARD: Good morning. This is Albert Howard. I'm also one of the Council Members.

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Is there anyone else.

2

3 MR. SHARP: This is Dan Sharp, with
4 BLM, in Anchorage.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Anyone else.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Well, thank you
11 all for joining in. I'd like to mention to the
12 audience that the acoustics are pretty poor for hearing
13 sometimes, so you might hear better if you move towards
14 the front. It might be a little easier. But if you're
15 able to hear, that's fine. But I just wanted to let
16 you know that it might be easier to hear, especially my
17 voice isn't all that great right now.

18

19 But what I'd like to do first is to
20 have anyone in the audience that wasn't here yesterday
21 to stand up and address the Council. Let us know what
22 your name is and who you're representing.

23

24 MR. NICKERSON: Klawock Cooperative
25 Association Tribe.

26

27 Thank you.

28

29 MR. SCOTT: Good morning. My name is
30 Ryan Scott. I work for the Alaska Department of Fish
31 and Game. I'm the regional supervisor for the Division
32 of Wildlife Conservation. And I'm joined today by Tom
33 Schumacher, our management coordinator, as well as Boyd
34 Porter, our local area biologist. And shortly we'll be
35 joined by Bruce Dale, the Division Director, as well.

36

37 Thank you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ryan.

40

41 Anyone else in the audience that wasn't
42 here yesterday that wants to be recognized.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. So first up,
47 I'd like to recognize that some of us haven't given our
48 reports for our region or our local community. And I
49 think we have a few of them.

50

1 I know Don Hernandez is en route. I
2 think he was supposed to be headed here today. But I'd
3 like to ask Patty if she would give her report now.

4
5 MS. PHILLIPS: Good morning, Chairman
6 Bangs. Yeah. Thank you for this opportunity to talk
7 about things going on in my area.

8
9 So, you know, obviously we have a whole
10 lot of snow coming down. And we've had some breaks in
11 between the, you know, really big snow events, with
12 the breaks in between the big snow events, there's been
13 opportunity for the deer to find forage feed. But this
14 snow is really piling up, so it's going to be a
15 struggle for them from here on out.

16
17 I will say that the people in my
18 community are just very -- you know, they very much
19 rely on venison for their food source. It's very
20 important to their food security to have this
21 subsistence food and deer and salmon. A lot of people
22 are getting less with what they're getting by on this
23 winter.

24
25 And with these snow events, coming
26 behind them comes torrential rainstorms. We're having,
27 you know, the flash floodings that we normally have,
28 but they seem much more severe. And because I'm on the
29 water a lot or I'm on the boat a lot, I see, you know,
30 there was already coho fingerlings coming out of the
31 systems. I think because they're -- you know, with all
32 the snow melt and the amount of rain coming down, it's
33 just pushing them out, how can they swim against that.

34
35
36 Anyways, also what I've noticed is we
37 have a humpback whale in the inlet all winter long.
38 And in fact it was circling in front of Lisianski River
39 feeding on what's coming out of their systems because
40 of these torrential rains. And so, you know, like just
41 it's more evidence of changing climate systems.

42
43 So that's my report, Mr. Chair.

44
45 Thank you very much.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much,
48 Patty. And we miss seeing you here. We're glad you
49 were able to phone in.

50

1 And is Mr. Yeager ready to give his
2 report.

3
4 MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In
5 Wrangell, some of the main concerns that we're having
6 -- and not all of them are necessarily concerns, but we
7 would still like to see the transboundary river mining
8 left on high priority with us and to keep that
9 mentioned there. We would like to keep that on check
10 as much as possible.

11
12 We had a good deer harvest over the
13 fall time and -- but there is growing concern about the
14 designated hunter program. And that is something that
15 is being addressed and worked on by the Wrangell AC
16 right now, but there's a concern for the amount of
17 hunters versus the number of deer there. They think
18 there's a potential problem on the horizon and so we'll
19 probably be seeing something from the community of
20 Wrangell on that.

21
22 The river's frozen still. There's
23 about two and a half feet of ice on the Stikine right
24 now; however, we feel there's been a -- by talking to a
25 resident that lives there this winter that a small run
26 of eulachon have already made it up the river. We're
27 surrounded by lots of eagles and sea lions right now
28 and so there's good indications that we've already seen
29 eulachon head up the Stikine.

30
31 One thing that was really interesting I
32 found was this year we had a really good winter king
33 fishery there. Both -- some of the commercial hand
34 trollers did real well, as well as our sportfishing.
35 And it was not uncommon for, you know, two to three --
36 sometimes four king salmon being caught in a few hours
37 there in the Wrangell area. So it made for some
38 promising fishing there during the winter months and
39 also the winter king tasted really good.

40
41 So other than that, we're battling the
42 snow as many of the other communities are. And we're
43 hoping that with the snow that we are getting that
44 we'll end up with a good river level up on the Stikine
45 and some good spawning habitat for the salmon that are
46 returning to the area.

47
48 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, John.

2
3 Okay. I'd like to give a report from
4 the Petersburg district. And it's very similar to what
5 John had to say. We're hopeful that we did have some
6 cold weather and we had snow, but I think the deer
7 fared pretty well this year. And I think they'll have
8 a good return on recruitment next year or this spring.

9
10 We are too having trouble with the
11 designated hunter program and I think it will -- RAC is
12 working as well on a proposal for trying to address the
13 abuse of the program. And I'm not sure if they'll work
14 with the Wrangell AC, but I'm sure that the Council
15 will be seeing some sort of a proposal from that group
16 as well.

17
18 So other than that, I think things were
19 fairly prolific in the fall and winter in Petersburg.
20 There was good king salmon fishing around the immediate
21 area. I don't know. As of late, it hasn't been that
22 great and I think they're real concerned about returns
23 to the spawning grounds for the spawning fish.

24
25 Other than that I just would like to go
26 into my report from our meeting at the Federal Board
27 level last winter or this winter. And there was no
28 problems with our -- or questions about our proposals
29 that were submitted -- the recommendations submitted by
30 the Council. One of them was the use of nets on the
31 road systems associated with Wrangell, Petersburg, and
32 Sitka. And it was passed unanimously by the Board. Or
33 it was on the non-consensus -- or the consensus agenda,
34 so there was no discussion that was at the Board
35 meeting.

36
37 The sling bow was the one that we had
38 voted down unanimously and that was on the consensus
39 agenda as well. There was some difference of opinion
40 among the Council Members on the net -- on the road
41 systems, but we did pass -- or we didn't approve the --
42 let's see. I think -- no. We did approve that --
43 prohibit the use, but there was votes against that
44 proposal, so we thought there might be questions from
45 the Federal Board. But there wasn't any questions and
46 they went along with the majority of the Council.

47
48 And I think the Federal Board was
49 pleased with our rationale behind all of our discussion
50

1 and I think we left a good record for them to look at.

2

3 So anyway, that's my report. And I
4 think the only other Council Member that hasn't given
5 their report is Don, and he'll be in hopefully this
6 morning before noon.

7

8 So with that, I'd like to go in --
9 there's some public testimony here that -- Dennis
10 Nickerson. Would you like to address the Council?
11 State your name and who you represent.

12

13 MR. NICKERSON: Good morning. My name
14 is Dennis Nickerson and I am the Tribal Treasurer for
15 Klawock Cooperative Association. And I would like to
16 thank everybody here for their time to hear the
17 proposals that are being recommended by our Tribal
18 Council.

19

20 Over the last month or so we've been
21 able to compile five -- we actually have sixteen, but
22 eleven of them do not pertain to the Federal
23 Subsistence Board. So we have stuff that's going to be
24 going to the State of Alaska, as well as the Fish and
25 Wildlife Service.

26

27 These are in no particular order. They
28 were just given to me as they are. The regulation that
29 we wish to change is in Unit 2 and the species is
30 sockeye. And we would like to increase the harvest
31 limit to 30 per day and 90 per household for the annual
32 limit. And the regulation should read the Klawock
33 River Drainage is closed to the use of seines and
34 gillnets from July 1 to July 8 and August 24 to August
35 31. The reason this regulation change needs to be made
36 is our means of harvesting sockeye are not being met
37 under State of Alaska management and enforcement.

38

39 The second one is for Unit 2, sockeye
40 as well. How the regulation should read is designating
41 another fish for you by designated harvest permit only.
42 If you are a Federally qualified subsistence user, you
43 may designate another Federally qualified subsistence
44 user to take fish on your behalf. Any species of fish
45 allowed for subsistence uses in an area may be taken
46 under a designated harvest permit. You can designate
47 only one person to fish for you at one time and you
48 cannot fish at the same time as your designated fisher.

49

50

1 Your designated hunter must get a
2 designated harvest permit before fishing -- that should
3 be fishing. Have a valid permit when fishing or
4 transporting the fish and must return a completed
5 harvest report of any fish taken. A designated fisher
6 may fish for any number of subsistence users, but may
7 not have more than four harvest limits in his or her
8 possession at any one time with more than two legal
9 limits of gear.

10

11 Why this regulation change should be
12 made. Our elderly and our disabled have a hard time
13 catching and processing fish. This can help with their
14 cultural structure and improve the economic well being
15 of our elderly and disabled. Most are already on a
16 fixed income and times can get challenging. A
17 designated fisher can help the community more by
18 allowing a designated fisher to harvest for more than
19 two per day.

20

21 Unit 2, deer. Customary and
22 traditional use determination. This should be for Unit
23 2 residents only. Harvest limits for residents of
24 Units 1A and 3, three deer and none can be female. And
25 the open season to be from August 8th to October 15th.
26 That's for Units 1A and 3 residents.

27

28 Why should this regulation change be
29 made. Reducing regulations to just Unit 2 residents
30 can help species population. Very little residents
31 travel to Units 1A or 3 to harvest deer. Resident
32 hunting increase can jeopardize fish or deer
33 population. Apex predators can be increasing and
34 having a stable deer population will assist predator
35 and resident hunting efforts.

36

37 My fourth one is what regulations you
38 wish to change. Management Unit number, Unit 2.
39 Species, deer. Customary and traditional use
40 determination for Unit 2 residents only. Harvest
41 limits, five deer. None can be female. And the open
42 season from July 24 to February 7.

43

44 Why should this regulation change be
45 made. Reducing regulations to just Unit 2 residents
46 can help species population. Apex predators can be
47 increasing and having a stable deer population will
48 assist predator and hunting efforts.

49

50

1 Number five is what regulation you wish
2 to change. The Unit number is 2. The species is black
3 bear. How should the regulation read. Customary and
4 traditional use determination, all rural residents.
5 Harvest limits, four bear. No more than one can be
6 blue or glacier bear. Open season August 24th to June
7 30th.

8
9 Why should this regulation change be
10 made. Increasing bear hunting can balance predator
11 prey species. Extreme weather events increased. Non-
12 Alaskan resident hunting is pressuring resident efforts
13 to harvest black bear and deer.

14
15 So those were the five proposals that
16 were -- are going to be submitted on behalf of Klawock
17 Cooperative Association. And I'm not too sure if this
18 is a time for public testimony or if that's another --
19 if there's another window for that.

20
21 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Nickerson, thank
22 you. There will be a window because these proposals
23 will come before the Council in a written form from the
24 Office of Subsistence Management. But I think I would
25 like to ask DeAnna to explain why these proposals are
26 on hold for -- put on the register.

27
28 DeAnna.

29
30 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
31 the record, this is DeAnna Perry, Council Coordinator
32 for the Southeast. The Federal Regulations we are
33 prohibited from posting anything in the Federal
34 Register at this time. I have actually spoken with
35 Theo Matuskowitz at OSM, who is our guru for Federal
36 Registers and he has advised me that although we are to
37 accept proposals, we can't move forward with the
38 proposals until such time as they are posted -- the
39 open call for wildlife proposals is posted.

40
41 We've been instructed to accept those
42 proposals here at our meetings -- all RAC meetings
43 throughout the State -- as well as if anyone would like
44 to submit them directly to OSM by email, fax or letter.
45 Regulations.gov -- there's no vehicle there. Because
46 the Federal Register is in a sense closed, nothing can
47 be posted. So what OSM has told all the coordinators
48 -- any proposals that are sent to OSM or that we accept
49 and give to OSM, they will hold until such time as the

50

1 Federal Register open call is posted. And then they
2 will populate the regulations.gov with those proposals.

3
4 So just want to make sure that everyone
5 knows that we are still accepting proposals, but they
6 will in a sense be in a holding pattern until we
7 legally can have them -- the wildlife call published in
8 the Federal Register.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms. Perry.

13
14 So as far as us discussing or having
15 public testimony, it would be more appropriate for
16 after they're posted that we could address them. So
17 does that answer your question?

18
19 MR. NICKERSON: Yes. Yes, it does.
20 And I just wanted to make sure that when the Federal
21 Register is sent out, will tribes, residents be
22 notified through letter or email.

23
24 CHAIRMAN BANGS: It will be posted on
25 the website for the subsistence program.

26
27 MR. NICKERSON: Okay.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Melinda. Cathy.
30 Melinda, she wanted you to say something, but I think
31 Cathy could do it.

32
33 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
34 was just going to mention that Melinda Burke in the
35 back of the room is a -- if you can raise your hand,
36 Melinda. She's the Native liaison with the U.S. Forest
37 Service and she can make sure that you personally get a
38 copy of that when it gets posted. She's a very good
39 advocate with working with the tribes on these things.

40
41 And if I may, I just want to make a
42 quick comment, Dennis. You did a great job by getting
43 these proposals put together and bringing them before
44 us today. And I've been on the Council for nine years
45 and I haven't seen that -- like somebody come forward
46 and actually read through proposals and stuff. And so
47 I'd like to encourage you or members of your Tribal
48 Council to make sure that when these proposals go
49 through the process that you guys follow them through.

50

1 It really helps when they come before
2 us that the proponent or the people proposing them were
3 able to interact with them and do that public testimony
4 at that time. So thank you for your time in doing
5 that.

6
7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Cathy.

8
9 Mr. Nickerson, did you have anything
10 else you would like to share?

11
12 MR. NICKERSON: Yes. Oh, I'm sorry.

13
14 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Douville.

15
16 MR. DOUVILLE: Just some additional
17 information I'd like to ask you. Thank you, Mr.
18 Chairman.

19
20 You're proposing a bag limit change and
21 a designated fisherman, which is -- I think is great.
22 But also keep in mind that most of the sockeye
23 subsistence fishery is done -- or personal use is done
24 in the State water. I think there might be a little
25 bit done in Federal water and that's the only part we
26 could address, so a good portion of what you're asking
27 would be -- would have to go through the Board of --
28 ADF&G Board of Fish.

29
30 MR. NICKERSON: Yes. We are aware of
31 that and we know where the borders are in Klawock. We
32 outreached to our subsistence users of sockeye so we
33 know where the borders are. And when it comes to us
34 using our Federal subsistence permit, that's when the
35 sockeye aren't there at their prime. So that's what
36 we're trying to address.

37
38 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
39 Douville.

40
41 Did you have any other comments, Mr.
42 Nickerson?

43
44 MR. NICKERSON: Well, I just wanted to
45 thank everybody for your time and this opportunity.
46 This is our first go at it. I've been a Council Member
47 for -- this is going into my sixth year. And it really
48 was a lot of reading. And I was given this opportunity
49 to do this on behalf of the Tribe and I take this
50

1 challenge on. And like Cathy stated, we will follow
2 through with these and we want to make sure that
3 there's balanced resources for now and for future
4 generations.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much
9 for your testimony and coming today.

10
11 Ms. Perry has some things to add to
12 this discussion about the Register.

13
14 Ms. Perry.

15
16 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

17
18 Mr. Nickerson, and for everyone
19 listening, I also wanted to kind of put this in time
20 context. The last time we had an administration change
21 it was my understanding that this same delay in
22 proposals happened. The last time the proposals were
23 -- actually, the call was in June. But they were able
24 -- that is the Office of Subsistence Management were
25 able to do all the analysis and still meet their
26 timeline later for the fall meeting. So that is our
27 hope.

28
29 But for now, no one knows when we'll be
30 able to publish to the Federal Register. But just kind
31 of wanted to give you a little bit more information
32 about what time we might be looking at.

33
34 Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

35
36 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.

37
38 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes.

39
40 MS. PHILLIPS: This is Patty Phillips.
41 I have a question, if I may.

42
43 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. Go ahead, Patty.

44
45 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. It's a
46 follow up to Mr. Nickerson and Mr. Douville's remark.
47 So is the Tribe planning on submit -- I understand that
48 you know the difference between Federal jurisdiction
49 and State jurisdiction, but does the Tribe plan on
50

1 submitting a proposal to the Board of Fish. Because
2 the time period for submitting proposals is now.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 MR. NICKERSON: Yes. We are. We had
7 Council meetings over the last month and we had to
8 separate out the issues we heard from our Council, as
9 well as our membership. So we wanted to make sure that
10 things were done in the correct order. And we do have
11 stuff ready that's going to be going to the Board of
12 Fisheries.

13

14 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. Thank you for
17 that, Patty.

18

19 Okay.

20

21 Is there any other questions for Mr.
22 Nickerson.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much,
27 Dennis, for your presentation.

28

29 MR. NICKERSON: Thank you.

30

31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I'd like to
32 remind everyone in the audience if you do want to make
33 public testimony there's some blue cards back there at
34 the desk where Mr. Reeves is. So you just fill those
35 out and we usually go through those every morning. But
36 we can take them in a timely manner if you have to
37 leave or can't testify in the morning.

38

39 So okay, I'd like to move through the
40 agenda here. Next up is we're going to new business,
41 but we're going to cover the wolf issue when some more
42 people are on their way here to discuss that. So I'd
43 like to move down to Justin Koller's presentation on
44 the Federal subsistence management of brown bears in
45 Southeast Region.

46

47 MR. KOLLER: Good morning, Mr. Bangs
48 and Members of the Council. My name is Justin Koller.
49 I'm a subsistence biologist for Sitka and Hoonah Ranger

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1 Districts.

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You received a report on brown bear management in Southeast Alaska. It was a supplement to your Council books and I distributed a copy to you this morning. It looks like this. There's a similar one for wolf, but this one says brown bears at the top. I'm just going to give you a brief summary of that report and answer any questions you may have.

So Alaska is home to approximately 70 percent of brown bears in North America. And research conducted primarily by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game indicates that brown bear populations in the Southeast Alaska region are healthy, having some of the highest densities in the world.

Brown bear population management consists of habitat and harvest management. Brown bear habitat management is guided by the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan and harvest management is guided by the United States Forest Service Shoreline Outfitter Guide Management Plans for different regions and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game brown bear management strategies.

Brown bear harvest regulations are established by the State Board of Game and the Federal Subsistence Board. The goal of providing users with a common set of rules for the benefit of rural and non-rural users. The fundamental difference between the State and Federal management is that meat of brown bears harvested under Federal regulations must be salvaged.

Brown bear populations are managed conservatively by the State, which allows for the continued opportunity for Federally qualified users to take a bear for food under Federal regulations. There is no estimate of Federal subsistence harvest in the Southeast Alaskan area because brown bears are taken and reported by State registration permits. There is likely very little or no subsistence harvest of brown bears in the Southeast Alaska area and a low level of subsistence harvest in the Yakutat area.

Brown bear population management is guided by a management plan developed by an advisory team comprised of agency personnel and local

1 stakeholders. Continued cooperation between agencies
2 with input from various stakeholders is essential to
3 successful brown bear management in Southeast Alaska.

4
5 The concludes my presentation, Mr.
6 Chair. And I'd be happy to answer any questions you
7 might have.

8
9 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Koller.

10
11 Any questions from the Council.

12
13 Mr. Kitka.

14
15 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16 Knowing that the population is fairly healthy, we -- we
17 see that the bear population has grown to the point
18 where we can see that the bears are starting to come
19 within to our communities. It was always known by our
20 people that when they got the population start getting
21 too big in those areas they'd start walking amongst us.
22 So we tried to keep them at a certain level so that
23 they didn't do that.

24
25 Also, just one other thing. I just
26 question the -- our people don't take the meat for food
27 of brown bear. Only black bear. And that's because of
28 the bear clans that's within out Tlingit people. So I
29 really don't like the regulation where you say you've
30 got to take the meat for that.

31
32 So that's all I have.

33
34 Thank you.

35
36 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Do you have a
37 response, Mr. Koller?

38
39 MR. KOLLER: Through the Chair. Mr.
40 Kitka, thank you for those comments. You're absolutely
41 right that the regulation currently requires the
42 salvage of meat. And I would probably take a proposal
43 to change that regulation.

44
45 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

46
47 We experienced the same with the black
48 bears. Most of the meat's salvaged and then they bring
49 it to town and throw it in the dumpster. And I don't

50

1 know exactly how they would go about changing that, but
2 it is a common occurrence.

3
4 We are noticing an increase in brown
5 bear population on Mitkof Island. And it's become a
6 concern to where there's been proposals to have a State
7 hunt. And to no avail, but there is a growing
8 population. And I'm not sure if the agencies have done
9 any estimates, but they may become a problem like what
10 Harvey is alluding to. Is they're coming into town and
11 that's a concern for the residents.

12
13 Are there any other questions for Mr.
14 Koller.

15
16 (No comments)

17
18 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Anyone online that has
19 a question from the Council.

20
21 MR. HOWARD: I have one, Mr. Chairman.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Mr. Howard.

24
25 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

26
27 My question is -- is there anything in
28 that permitting process that prevents a big game hunter
29 from taking a bear at the same time they're hunting
30 deer. That seems to be an unattended consequence on
31 Admiralty Island, is our residents are -- seem to be
32 competing with big game hunters in the fall. And we're
33 trying to address it at the tribe level but I'm just
34 wondering if there's anything in the process of
35 permitting that would address that, if you're a big
36 game hunter hunting for a brown bear on Admiralty that
37 you're not allowed to take any deer.

38
39 MR. KOLLER: I'm not sure there's
40 anything in Federal regulation that prevents that. Mr.
41 Ryan Scott from the State is here and he may be able to
42 address that a little bit better from the State side.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Terry.

45
46 MR. SUMINSKI: Yeah. Mr. Chairman,
47 Terry Suminski, with the Forest Service. I think Mr.
48 Howard is probably referring to the guides that are
49 permitted by the Forest Service. You know, and I --

50

1 yeah. I'm not really sure if there's anything to
2 prevent those hunters -- those guided bear hunters from
3 taking deer at the same time, but I'd have to check
4 into that with our special use permit people. That
5 would probably -- thank you.

6
7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
8 Suminski.

9
10 Did Mr. Scott have anything to add from
11 the State's perspective? Or is it.....

12
13 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
14 would echo what Mr. Koller said. There isn't anything
15 in State regulations that prevents the harvest of deer
16 while folks are out brown bear hunting; however, the
17 majority of guided brown bear hunting, which is -- and
18 the commercial uses managed by the Forest Service
19 occurs in the spring. So there's very little brown
20 bear guided activity in the fall. And at least my
21 experience suggests that most of the guided deer
22 hunting occurs later in the fall and into early winter.

23
24 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.
25
26 Does that answer your question, Mr.
27 Howard?

28
29 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

30
31 The question was, is there anything in
32 the process that we can change that to where if you're
33 guided bear hunting for brown bear on Admiralty that
34 you're not allowed to take any deer off the island.
35 I've heard it said in a Tribal meeting through
36 different agencies if a client takes a brown bear too
37 early then they just sit around and did nothing. So
38 they gave them the opportunity to take a deer as well.
39 And that's been the tribe's concern here because when
40 you got 80 percent unemployment, Mr. Chairman, we're
41 competing with somebody who has money to do a brown
42 bear hunt.

43
44 So thank you, Mr. Chair.

45
46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Howard.

47
48 Any other questions from the Council or
49 did you have any comments to respond.

50

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
4 Scott, Mr. Koller, and Mr. Suminski.

5

6 Okay. Next on the agenda, if there's
7 no more discussion about brown bear management I'd like
8 to move to WCR15-02 Moose Closure Review from OSM. I
9 think Ms. Oehlers is going to give us that
10 presentation.

11

12 Ms. Oehlers.

13

14 MS. OEHLERS: Okay. Good morning, Mr.
15 Chairman, Members of the Council. For the record, my
16 name is Susan Oehlers. I am a wildlife biologist with
17 the Forest Service, based out of Yakutat, and I will be
18 presenting a brief summary of the wildlife closure
19 process, followed by a summary of the closure review
20 for WCR15-02. A summary of the wildlife closure
21 process can be found on page 23 of your meeting book.

22

23 OSM reviews wildlife closures every
24 three years to determine if the justification for the
25 closure is still consistent with the Federal
26 Subsistence Board's closure policy. Section .815 of
27 ANILCA allows the Federal Subsistence Board to restrict
28 or close the taking of fish and wildlife by subsistence
29 and non-subsistence users on Federal public lands when
30 necessary for the conservation of healthy populations
31 of fish and wildlife or to continue subsistence uses of
32 such populations.

33

34 Recognizing that the distribution and
35 abundance of fish and wildlife populations can
36 fluctuate along with subsistence use patterns, the
37 Board decided in 2007 to conduct closure reviews every
38 three years or earlier if any information becomes
39 available that would potentially allow the closure to
40 be lifted. Councils are asked to consider the OSM
41 preliminary recommendation, share their view on the
42 issues, and make a recommendation to the Board.

43

44 After the Council reviews the closure
45 review they have three options, which would be in the
46 form of an action item to maintain the status quo,
47 modify or rescind. If the Council recommends to modify
48 or rescind the closure review then they should submit a
49 proposal, which would be a separate action, at this

50

1 time. Councils may choose to work with the OSM Staff
2 to develop the proposal; however, proposals addressing
3 these issues can be submitted by other individuals or
4 organizations as well.

5
6 So are there any questions on the
7 wildlife closure policy before I move into the summer
8 of the closure review.

9
10 (No comments)

11
12 MS. OEHLERS: Okay. So I'll go ahead
13 with just a brief summary of the analysis of closure
14 review WCR15-02. This can be found on page 24 of your
15 meeting book.

16
17 So the issue is that hunting on Federal
18 public lands in Unit 5A are close to the hunting of
19 moose, except by residents of Unit 5A. This closure
20 was last reviewed in 2012. And for background,
21 beginning on page 26 of your book, the Southeast
22 Council has supported closure of Federal public lands
23 in Unit 5A, except Nunatak Bench, to provide
24 subsistence opportunity to rural residents of Unit 4A
25 with customary and traditional use.

26
27 The area is typically subject to high
28 hunting pressure and is subject to period declines due
29 to predation and severe winters, in addition to hunting
30 pressure. The moose population in Unit 5A, the Yakutat
31 Forelands, has remained relatively stable since 2000,
32 but it's still well below the State management
33 objective. And the most recent bull to cow ratios in
34 the review from November 2011 was 20 bulls to 100 cows,
35 which is also below the State management objective.
36 Under harvest history, the annual moose harvest from
37 2001 to 2014 averaged 38, ranging from 25 to 48.

38
39 And the OSM preliminary recommendation
40 is to maintain the status quo for WCR15-02. And based
41 on the -- the justification is that current low
42 population numbers, bull to cow ratios, and calf to cow
43 ratios remain below the State management objectives and
44 the status quo of the wildlife closure is necessary to
45 maintain subsistence use of moose on Federal public
46 lands under Section .815(c) of ANILCA.

47
48 So that concludes my presentation, the
49 summer of the closure review, and I am willing to
50

1 entertain any questions if there are any.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Are there any
4 questions from the Council.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN BANGS: How about online. Is
9 there anyone online that would like to ask a question
10 of Ms. Oehlers.

11

12 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.

13

14 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes.

15

16 MS. PHILLIPS: This is Patricia
17 Phillips. On page 28, at the top it says the State
18 developed a management plan in 1990 to maintain a moose
19 population of 1,000 animals post-hunt; to sustain an
20 annual harvest of 70 moose; and to provide a hunter
21 success rate of 28 percent. Has this had -- is there
22 plans to update that management plan and how does that
23 sit with the Federal management.

24

25 MS. OEHLERS: I would ask if the State
26 would like to speak to that as far as the State
27 management plan.

28

29 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Would the State like
30 to make a response.

31

32 Thank you, Mr. Scott.

33

34 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

35 At this juncture, we aren't intending -- we're not
36 planning on changing those objectives. That doesn't
37 mean that they're not -- they're certainly not written
38 in stone. As additional information becomes available
39 and -- you know, we'll do that.

40

41 We also have entered a new phase in our
42 management strategies where we're working on
43 operational planning. Going through objectives and
44 goals and capturing what has happened over time and
45 what we intend to do into the future. And the moose
46 one has just recently been done and so it's actually --
47 you know, there's more opportunity actually to make
48 adjustments to that.

49

50

1 I think it's also important to point
2 out as far as Unit 5A goes, that there's a portion of
3 that unit that gets harvested very, very quickly. And
4 Ms. Oehlers can -- you know, I don't remember the
5 number of days that it went, but it's -- with some
6 fairly recent changes in land management, people have
7 filled that gap. And certainly it's a point of
8 discussion between the Forest Service and the
9 Department of how to relieve some of that user
10 pressure, to extend that season out and provide as much
11 opportunity as we can.

12

13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ryan.

14

15 Does that answer your question, Patty?

16

17 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah. Partially. So to
18 follow up on page 32, it says the moose population has
19 remain stable at approximately 483 since 2000, but is
20 still below current State management objective of
21 1,000. It would seem -- I don't know -- just this
22 management plan has been imposed since 1990, so it's
23 what -- 2000 -- 27 years and we haven't seen -- it's
24 just remained stable. So is that habitat just set up
25 for about 500 moose or can it handle 1,000?

26

27 MS. SCOTT: Through the Chair. So the
28 1990 -- there is a Southeast Alaska Moose Management
29 Plan for the entire region that was worked on in 1990
30 through 1991. And as I mentioned a few minutes ago,
31 the operational planning -- it's not the same as
32 looking at a strategic type of plan to manage all moose
33 populations, but it is intended to look at some of
34 those objectives and things that we can change and
35 impact.

36

37 The moose numbers in Yakutat -- and
38 having been fortunate enough to spend time there and do
39 some of the survey work and talk with hunters -- it
40 goes up and down quite a bit. Throughout the winters
41 of 2006, 2007 and then again in 2011, 2012, we
42 certainly saw the dip in that where the numbers -- just
43 it's a point estimate. It's a day in time where we go
44 out and count moose. But it reflected that there were
45 fewer there.

46

47 Some of the other challenges is, you
48 know, again I come back to these small areas that
49 people are hunting and some of the objectives that

50

1 we're not meeting. We do survey work post-hunt where
2 people go out and shoot bulls. And so to go out and
3 find some bulls -- to find bulls some years can be a
4 challenge. And there's just fewer available because
5 they've been harvested.

6
7 So the habitat -- we don't have current
8 information on habitat capability. Over the years
9 people have spent time on the ground, looking at the
10 willow stands, but we also believe that right now, as
11 with many ungulate species, you know, given our -- this
12 winter's not overly representative for sure, but if we
13 think back to the last few winters, many of those
14 species have responded to that and we believe that's
15 happening in Yakutat as well.

16
17 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.

18
19 Does that answer your question; do you
20 have a follow up, Ms. Phillips?

21
22 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
23 Yeah.

24
25 So, page 29, there's a paragraph that
26 says -- that references -- actually references Fish and
27 Game and (indiscernible - distortion). So no formal
28 habitat studies have been conducted. It's relatively
29 stable population. It's good body condition and high
30 pregnancy, twinning rates, and good quality forage
31 habitat. So can that habitat handle a stable
32 population of 1,000.

33
34 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. I
35 wouldn't want to venture that guess at this point. You
36 know, certainly when the habitat work had been done
37 previously, it was a different time. And that would be
38 something that would need to be assessed.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.

41
42 Any other follow ups.

43
44 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45
46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Ms. Phillips.

47
48 MS. PHILLIPS: Oh. I said thank you,
49 Mr. Chair. That's all I have.

50

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.
2
3 Are there any other questions from the
4 Council.
5
6 (No comments)
7
8 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much.
9
10 MS. OEHLERS: Thank you.
11
12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Mr. Suminski.
13
14 MR. SUMINSKI: Yes, Mr. Chair. Terry
15 Suminski, with the Forest Service. This is an action
16 item, so the action would be whether you want to
17 continue with the closure or not.
18
19 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.
20
21 So what's the wishes of the Council to
22 entertain a motion.
23
24 Yes, Ms. Needham.
25
26 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
27 move to maintain the status quo of the Federal wildlife
28 closure for WCR15-02.
29
30 MR. YEAGER: Second.
31
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. It's moved and
33 seconded to basically adopt the proposal. Is that your
34 intention.
35
36 MS. NEEDHAM: On page 31 of the review
37 materials, I was moving to -- I was taking OSM's
38 recommendation on whether or not the wildlife closure
39 should continue. And so I said maintain the status quo
40 of the closure. I don't believe that's a proposal.
41 It's maintaining the closure that is currently in
42 regulation.
43
44 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I might be off
45 on this, but I think it is a proposal. It's a proposal
46 to maintain the status quo. Am I right. Or it's a
47 request. I don't.....
48
49 Mr. Suminski.
50

1 MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Chairman, it's
2 actually a -- the policy is every three years we review
3 all of the closures that are in effect. So this is
4 just a -- I don't know if it's truly a proposal, but
5 it's mainly just do you agree with the review of this
6 closure. And the OSM recommendation is to maintain the
7 closure, maintain the status quo.

8
9 So whether you call it a proposal or
10 not, I'm not really sure if that matters. But we're
11 looking for your recommendation on whether that closure
12 should be maintained.

13
14 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that
15 clarification. I'm still a little -- I kept trying to
16 catch up. I apologize.

17
18 But okay, so we have a motion to
19 maintain the status quo and we have a second. Is there
20 any more discussion from the Council.

21
22 Mr. Reifenstuhl.

23
24 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
25 So if we voted against it, then this would go to the
26 Federal Board. And then they would still -- they would
27 be the ones that would maintain this closure or not; is
28 that correct.

29
30 CHAIRMAN BANGS: I believe that's
31 correct.

32
33 Mr. Suminski, is that proper?

34
35 MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Chairman, yes, the
36 Board would make the final decision. But if the
37 Council voted against it, of course the Board would
38 have to come up with one of the three reasons to oppose
39 the Council recommendation. So.....

40
41 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

42
43 Any other questions.

44
45 Mr. Kitka.

46
47 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It
48 would be really nice to hear what the residents of Unit
49 5 would have to say about this because I feel like we
50

1 don't have anybody from Unit 5 here to talk to us about
2 this.

3
4 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Kitka.

5
6 I believe Ms. Oehlers may have a
7 response.

8
9 MS. OEHLERS: Sure. Through the Chair.
10 Mr. Kitka, you know, as Mr. Scott alluded to, you know,
11 this area does receive high hunting pressure. At this
12 point, at least on the west side of the Forelands, the
13 area closer to town, the harvest is predominantly -- in
14 the last few years 100 percent by local subsistence
15 users. And, you know, they definitely do I think feel
16 that this is necessary, you know, to meet their
17 subsistence uses.

18
19 You know, in the past few years we've
20 met our harvest quota within about four days. And we
21 haven't even gotten to the point of opening the State
22 season. So, you know, I feel pretty comfortable
23 speaking, you know, for the community that -- that they
24 would support this closure to stay in effect.

25
26 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

27
28 A follow up, Mr. Kitka?

29
30 MR. KITKA: No.

31
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Thank you.

33
34 Any other questions.

35
36 Mr. Schroeder.

37
38 MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Chairman, just by
39 way of comment, I'm kind of following up on I think
40 what Patty was reading into this. In that what we have
41 here it seems like a -- basically a continuing
42 situation. The closure has been in effect for quite a
43 while and is likely to remain in effect for quite a
44 while into the future because there's high demand for
45 moose by Yakutat residents.

46
47 The justification I feel needs some
48 revision on the part of the Federal Office of
49 Subsistence Management because it states that the

50

1 population is low. That it's below current management
2 objectives. That the bull/cow ratio is not being met.
3 Again, it says is limited as moose numbers are
4 currently low. That writing suggests that we're in a
5 temporary situation and that if we follow this for a
6 while then we would meet these. And I don't believe
7 that that's the case. I think we're dealing much more
8 with a continuing situation.

9
10 So I do support the closure, but I
11 wanted to make that comment.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
14 Schroeder.

15
16 Mr. Douville.

17
18 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
19 The number 1,000 that Patty was referring to was you're
20 talking population, if you will. Was there any
21 evidence that there was 1,000 in this area. What is
22 this number based off of.

23
24 MS. OEHLERS: Through the Chair. Mr.
25 Douville, I can't speak for specifically what that
26 number was based on, but I can say that historically
27 there were higher numbers of moose on the Yakutat
28 Forelands. They first started establishing a
29 population in about the 1930s. They immigrated in
30 naturally and kind of as is typical with wildlife
31 populations they rapidly expanded. It was, you know,
32 new habitat for them. Younger habitat. And they did
33 expand to fairly high numbers. You know, upwards in
34 the thousands I believe by the '60s or '70s.

35
36 But that was followed by a population
37 crash. There was I think combined heavy winters. There
38 was very high hunting pressure at the time. And then
39 also predation. So those things combined to
40 dramatically, you know, drop the population. The
41 hunting was actually halted for several years to allow
42 the population to rebuild. So since that crash, you
43 know, they've kind of stabilized at the numbers that
44 we're seeing today.

45
46 So at one point in time there were
47 higher numbers, but, you know, I think that that was
48 probably not a sustainable population. That was a --
49 you know, a new population. The habitat has changed,
50

1 you know, with succession. There's not, you know, as
2 much young willow habitat as there was at one point.
3 So that's -- that may be where some of that came in,
4 you know, was from historical numbers.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

7
8 Any other questions.

9
10 (No comments)

11
12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any questions from the
13 Council Members that are online.

14
15 MS. PHILLIPS: This is Patty Phillips.

16
17 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Patty.

18
19 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes. Thank you. So has
20 the -- the C&T is for residents of Yakutat only or
21 residents of Unit 5A.

22
23 Mr. Chair.

24
25 MS. OEHLERS: Yes, Ms. Phillips.
26 Through the Chair. It is residents of Unit 5A, which
27 is basically Yakutat residents.

28
29 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Any follow
32 up, Patty.

33
34 MS. PHILLIPS: No. Thank you.

35
36 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Thank you, Ms.
37 Phillips.

38
39 Any other questions from Council
40 Members online.

41
42 MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chair.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. Is this Mr.
45 Howard?

46
47 MR. WRIGHT: This is Frank.

48
49 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. Go ahead, Frank.

50

1 MR. WRIGHT: I was wondering if the
2 1,000 number was some base number of some kind. Is
3 that ever going to change or is that the -- because
4 they're running about 500 in the area and I was just
5 wondering, you know, since this 1,000 number came in
6 1990. That's quite a while ago.

7
8 So is that ever going to change.

9
10 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Scott.

11
12 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
13 Through the Chair. Mr. Wright, again that's an
14 objective that certainly is subject to change. We did
15 have a -- as you look through the survey numbers in
16 your book as well, I'd point out that it is a snapshot
17 in time. Yakutat for us is sometimes difficult.

18
19 Thankfully, we got Ms. Oehlers up there
20 and she could jump in an airplane and go count moose
21 and/or we could do it collectively. It's a day that we
22 go out and we fly the Forelands. And we've got four
23 survey areas -- the east and west side of the
24 Forelands, Nunatak Bench up in Russell Fjord and then
25 across Yakutat Bay on the Malaspina Forelands.

26
27 Last year the current area biologist
28 Stephanie Sell was able to get there and did an
29 outstanding job. Caught the weather well. And we're
30 working on getting the numbers. I apologize for not
31 having them right now. But it was an amazing amount of
32 moose. We didn't get to 1,000, but we're getting
33 close.

34
35 So we're actually -- you know, there
36 are other objectives that were not getting there. The
37 bull to cow ratio and certain portions of it,
38 especially the areas with the high user -- or the high
39 use close to Yakutat. But 30 miles down the road or
40 across the river, the bull to cow ratios go up
41 considerably. It's an access thing, where in the past
42 we've had air taxi services that operated year round.
43 There's multiple air fields and, you know, even the
44 price was better at one point that people could get on
45 a plane and charter down and harvest moose. And now we
46 don't have a year round air taxi there, so -- and
47 there's not a lot of privately owned airplanes.

48
49 So there's -- you know, again we've got

50

1 some high user -- an area of high density hunters close
2 to Yakutat and then we have some limitations where
3 people can actually get to other places. So it becomes
4 -- it's a matter in my way of thinking and then in many
5 of our discussions is how to distribute that effort to
6 meet, not only subsistence needs, but we'd like to see,
7 you know, portions of the area available to all hunters
8 as well.

9
10 I don't think it's nearly the -- the
11 number of moose might not be the bigger issue here at
12 this point in time and I certainly will try to get
13 those numbers for you and I can talk to you, you know,
14 off line or however you'd like to do that about what we
15 have.

16
17 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.

18
19 Did you have a follow up, Mr. Wright?

20
21 MR. WRIGHT: No. I was just wondering
22 about it because, you know, it's been a while since
23 that number has been there. But -- and, you know, I
24 don't know what the quota is for the community of
25 Yakutat is so I don't know (indiscernible - distortion)
26 population goes up, then this will come back to us and
27 say that we need to change the proposal because I think
28 the Yakutat people would probably like a lot more moose
29 than what they're getting. So that's just a comment, I
30 guess. So if there's anything come back on their side,
31 then I'd like to hear it.

32
33 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34
35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Wright.

36
37 Any other questions.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 CHAIRMAN BANGS: You have a comment?

42
43 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
44 Ms. Oehlers actually had the survey memo with her. I
45 appreciate that.

46
47 So in December, I believe, of --
48 December of 2015, Ms. Sell was able to survey all the
49 areas that we discussed earlier. She counted a total
50

1 -- so observed a total of 828 moose. And that's on
2 both sides of the Forelands. The west side and the
3 east side.

4
5 Some of the bull to cow ratios west of
6 the Dangerous River, which is close to Yakutat, 16 to
7 100. Again, remember this is post-hunt. Sometimes I
8 -- I have certainly been there where it's difficult to
9 find a bull, so 16 to 100 is low. It's below our
10 objectives. But it's -- you know, we're not seeing
11 that collapse.

12
13 East of the Dangerous -- that area that
14 I mentioned is difficult to access at this point -- 21
15 bulls to 100 cows. And overall for the Forelands it
16 was 19 bulls to 100 cows. So while we're below
17 objectives, we're not that far off. You know, again
18 828 moose total and then, you know, creeping up on
19 those bull to cow ratios as well.

20
21 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.

22
23 Any other questions from anyone online
24 on the Council.

25
26 (No comments)

27
28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any Council Members
29 here in the room that have any questions.

30
31 MS. NEEDHAM: I have a question.

32
33 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Ms. Needham.

34
35 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

36
37 Ms. Oehlers, my understanding is that
38 this will come back to us in three years. Is that true
39 that the Federal Board will actually look at wildlife
40 closures again in three years?

41
42 MS. OEHLERS: Through the Chair. Ms.
43 Needham, yeah. That's the general schedule is every
44 three years, but they can also review it earlier if
45 there is some new information that arises that may
46 warrant a review sooner.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

49
50

1 Mr. Suminski.
2
3 MR. SUMINSKI: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. I
4 just wanted to clarify what I said about the process
5 with this. If the Council does choose to do something
6 different than maintain the status quo -- you know, the
7 OSM recommendation -- say they want to oppose it or --
8 they would -- the Council would then put in a proposal
9 to remove the closure and then that would be analyzed
10 in the regular proposal process.
11
12 So all right. Thank you.
13
14 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that
15 information.
16
17 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.
18
19 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Is there any
20 questions. Ms. Phillips.
21
22 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
23
24
25 Yeah. On that, I'm wondering if we can
26 put this closure on this -- this closure requirements
27 into regulatory management and take it out of closure
28 status.
29
30 Mr. Chair.
31
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms.
33 Phillips.
34
35 Do you understand exactly, Ms. Oehlers,
36 what she's getting at? I think it is alluding to a
37 proposal to change it.
38
39 MS. OEHLERS: Ms. Phillips, could you
40 repeat that or clarify, please?
41
42 MS. PHILLIPS: Rather than have this be
43 a proposal that goes under a three-year closure review,
44 can the RAC submit a proposal to put it into regulation
45 on a permanent basis. One that would be subject to
46 proposal changes by, you know, the process that we
47 normally follow.
48
49 Over.
50

1 MS. OEHLERS: Through the Chair. Ms.
2 Phillips, I think I'm understanding your question. I
3 mean basically this -- you know, this is in the
4 regulation. The closure is in the Federal regulations.
5 It's just that it gets reviewed every three years. And
6 I believe, you know, they -- there could also be
7 proposals put forth by the public or anyone if they
8 wanted to change it.

9
10 Does that answer your question?

11
12 MS. PHILLIPS: Sort of.

13
14 Mr. Chairman, maybe can you help me
15 out? So what I'm trying to say is can we have this be
16 -- or seem to be only hunt, without having to go
17 through an every three year closure review?

18
19 Over.

20
21 MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Chairman, Terry
22 Suminski. I believe the -- whatever type of closure it
23 would be would still fall under the Board's policy to
24 review it every three years. So in this case, it is in
25 regulation, you know, as a closure. And the Board
26 policy is to review all those types of closures every
27 three years. So I think we're where we're supposed to
28 be.

29
30 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that
31 clarification.

32
33 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

34
35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Does that help you
36 understand it better, Patty?

37
38 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes. Thank you.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

41
42 Is there any other questions from
43 Council.

44
45 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman, this is
46 Albert.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. Go ahead, Mr.
49 Howard.

50

1 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
2 I have two questions, I guess. Is there anything in
3 black and white concerning the information -- in front
4 of me that shows that the local, you know, IRA supports
5 this. And is there any -- the second question is -- is
6 there anything in black and white that shows we're
7 meeting the needs of the subsistence users in the
8 Yakutat area.

9
10 So those are my two questions, Mr.
11 Chair.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Howard.

14
15 Ms. Oehlers, do you have a response?

16
17 MS. OEHLERS: Yeah. As far as meeting
18 the needs of the subsistence users, I guess all I can
19 really say is that as far as the harvest, you know, we
20 set the quota every year. We have been setting it at
21 25 the past few years. And, you know, like I stated
22 earlier, the majority of the harvest is by local
23 subsistence users. I would say that certainly probably
24 they would like to be able to harvest more, but as far
25 as, you know, between subsistence users and non-
26 subsistence users, the majority of the harvest does go
27 to the subsistence users.

28
29 I don't know if that answers the
30 question or not.

31
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Howard, did you
33 have a follow up?

34
35 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
36 The question was is there anything in black and white
37 that comes out of Yakutat that supports this either
38 way. Because this is our second agenda item that we've
39 talked about the area and there isn't even a
40 representative.

41
42 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

43
44 MS. OEHLERS: Through the Chair. Yeah.
45 I don't have anything in black and white. If you're
46 looking for like a letter of support from the Tribe, I
47 don't have anything written. But I -- you know, I'm
48 pretty comfortable in saying that this would be
49 supported by the community and the tribe.

50

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms.
2 Oehlers.
3
4 Does that answer your question, Mr.
5 Howard?
6
7 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
8 Yes, it does. I think in the situation, if we could
9 figure out how to get them to (indiscernible -
10 distortion) issues like this concerning them.
11
12 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
13
14 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for your
15 comments.
16
17 Any other questions.
18
19 (No comments)
20
21 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for your
22 presentation. We have a motion on the floor to
23 maintain status quo on WCR15-02. Seeing no more
24 discussion, I would entertain a question.
25
26 MR. YEAGER: Question.
27
28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: The question has been
29 called for on maintaining status quo on WCR15-02. All
30 those in favor, say aye.
31
32 IN UNISON: Aye.
33
34 CHAIRMAN BANGS: All those opposed,
35 nay.
36
37 MR. HOWARD: Aye.
38
39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Was that a nay. Maybe
40 we should do a roll call. I apologize. I thought it
41 would be easier. Most of the time the Council is here,
42 so please give us a roll call, Mr. Kitka.
43
44 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45
46 Steve Reifenstuhl.
47
48 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Aye.
49
50

1 MR. KITKA: Frank Wright, Jr.
2
3 MR. WRIGHT: Aye.
4
5 MR. KITKA: Patricia Phillips.
6
7 MS. PHILLIPS: Aye.
8
9 MR. KITKA: Michael Douville.
10
11 MR. DOUVILLE: Aye.
12
13 MR. KITKA: Harvey Kitka votes aye.
14
15 Robert Schroeder.
16
17 MR. SCHROEDER: Aye.
18
19 MR. KITKA: Albert Howard.
20
21 MR. HOWARD: Aye.
22
23 MR. KITKA: Donald Hernandez.
24
25 MR. HERNANDEZ: Aye.
26
27 MR. KITKA: John Yeager.
28
29 MR. YEAGER: Aye.
30
31 MR. KITKA: Michael Bangs.
32
33 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Aye.
34
35 MR. KITKA: Cathy Needham.
36
37 MS. NEEDHAM: Aye.
38
39 MR. KITKA: Mr. Chair, we've got eleven
40 for and two absent.
41
42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Kitka.
43
44 So the motion carries.
45
46 Thank you for that. And I'd like to
47 welcome Don in. And what's the update, Mr. Hernandez?
48
49 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike. I'm
50

1 sorry I'm running a little late. I was talking to the
2 airlines again. Bad weather down between Point Baker
3 and Ketchikan. I told them I would just cancel my
4 trip. I don't think I'm going to make it. So I'll be
5 online.

6
7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Thank you. And
8 I'm glad you're here -- or there online anyway. So
9 hopefully the weather will subside.

10
11 Okay. I'd like to take a short break
12 here. And we'll convene in another 15 minutes.

13
14 Thank you.

15
16 (Off record)

17
18 (On record)

19
20 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I'd like to
21 call the meeting back to order, please.

22
23 Okay. We have a presentation today.
24 And I'd like to introduce Mr. Tony Christianson, the
25 Chairman of the Federal Board.

26
27 Tony.

28
29 MR. CHRISTIANSON: Good morning and
30 thank you. And I got the honor this morning to go
31 ahead and give the certificate of appreciation for the
32 years of service on the Federal Subsistence Regional
33 Advisory Board. And again thanks for the honor. I
34 showed up a little late. The roads are bad. But
35 always willing to acknowledge those people who put
36 their time and energy into meeting and putting in their
37 time on important issues in our region, like
38 subsistence and food security.

39
40 And so this certificate of appreciation
41 for 15 years of service is for Harvey Kitka. And we'd
42 like to recognize Harvey and thank him for all of the
43 dedication and service.

44
45 (Applause)

46
47 MR. KITKA: Time went fast.

48
49 MR. CHRISTIANSON: Time went fast.

50

1 (Laughter)

2
3 MR. CHRISTIANSON: Yeah. And it's --
4 I've been fortunate to be around Harvey for a few years
5 here and I know he's one of the few people that take
6 issues out of Southeast and follow them to the Board
7 level in Anchorage. And I got to watch him testify
8 and take those concerns specifically to herring and it
9 makes a difference when people are taking their
10 concerns to this Board and testifying and also to the
11 next level. It's really important when we get to hear
12 from the people what the issues are. And it does
13 really pull on the people who make the decisions at the
14 next level on how to make better management practices
15 and serve the people's needs for subsistence.

16
17 So thank you for that, Harvey. We
18 really appreciate your service.

19
20 The other certificate of appreciation
21 for 15 years of service is for Donald Hernandez. And
22 Donald unfortunately isn't here. I think he may be on
23 the line.

24
25 And so again to you, Donald, we thank
26 you for your years of service on the Federal
27 Subsistence Board Regional Advisory Council and look
28 forward to continued service by you. And good luck
29 where you're at.

30
31 Thank you.

32
33 (Applause)

34
35 MR. CHRISTIANSON: And thank you for
36 that opportunity and good luck with this meeting.

37
38 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
39 Christianson.

40
41 Before we go on, I'd like to back up
42 just a little bit. And as everyone knows, I was
43 weathered out for a while before we got in and I'm
44 still kind of under the weather with my voice, but I
45 wanted to thank Cathy on the record for doing such a
46 good job and for filling in for me. Really appreciated
47 that and I'm -- I know she did a really good job. I
48 listened in. And I just wanted to say thank you,
49 Cathy.

50

1 Okay. With that said, I'd like to move
2 on to our wolf presentation. And we're going to start
3 with Mr. Reeves on Federal subsistence management of
4 wolves in Southeast Region.

5
6 MR. REEVES: Good morning, Mr. Chairman
7 and Council Members. So Jeff Reeves, with the U.S.
8 Forest Service.

9
10 So a few weeks ago you should have
11 received this copy electronically, plus another copy
12 was actually handed out this morning. This paper here
13 -- it's a result of a request from the Council at the
14 Petersburg meeting this past fall. And what it is is
15 it's -- it provides this Council an overview of the
16 wolf management and strategies of wolf management and
17 various components of it throughout Southeast Alaska.
18 So Units 1 through 5.

19
20 And I don't have a real, you know, big
21 presentation on it, but what I thought I could just do
22 it just kind of -- we could just kind of go through it
23 piece by piece and give explanation of important little
24 pieces that are within this. So one thing that you'll
25 find is that there's really no major difference in like
26 specific Federal regulations related to wolf. A lot of
27 the units you'll see basically use the State's
28 regulations and rules.

29
30 There are few differences in some and
31 you'll be able to find that in this -- there's a --
32 Table 2 has a listing of the different seasons and
33 comparisons by the unit, the Federal seasons and the
34 State seasons. The harvest is typically covered by
35 sealing requirements. Those requirements for the most
36 part are consistent across the units. Table 3 will
37 give you a breakdown of those sealing requirements by
38 specific units and the specific State or Federal
39 hunting or trapping regulations.

40
41 So when you get into the harvest,
42 there's a number of tables that begin on page four. So
43 Tables 4, 5, 6, 7 -- these kind of -- they give you a
44 breakdown of harvests by the game management units over
45 the years. They give you a breakdown of methods used
46 to harvest by those years. And the -- so the methods
47 are cumulative for all the units. They're not unit
48 specific. There Table 6 gives you a breakdown of
49 harvest by month and Table 7 gives you the breakdown of
50

1 the transportation used to go harvest the wolves by
2 year.

3
4 One thing that was found by a review of
5 the harvest data is that wolves are harvested primarily
6 by Federally qualified users in the management unit
7 that their community is in. And so Table 8 will give
8 you a breakdown of wolf harvest. Whether it's
9 Federally qualified users, non-Federally qualified or
10 breaking it down further into non-resident harvest by
11 year. And Table 9 then breaks down rural communities
12 in Southeast and you get the breakdown of their harvest
13 over time in specific game management units. And then
14 the last column in that table basically gives you the
15 percentage of the overall harvest by residents of those
16 communities within their own unit. So what you'll see
17 is that again it shows that the majority of the harvest
18 is occurring in their unit.

19
20 So the last few pages get into just a
21 little summary on the land use management, so there's a
22 little bit of -- there's direction I should say in the
23 Tongass Land Management Plan. There's been some slight
24 direction on the State level for predator control, but
25 whether -- that hasn't really been instituted yet. And
26 there's a link in there regarding how the Federal
27 program does not adopt, you know, programs related to
28 that.

29
30 And then finally we get into just a
31 summary on the research. And we kind of get to the
32 point that we hope that the -- that's what's in this
33 can give this Council, you know, the idea if -- is
34 there any need for regulatory changes or not.

35
36 And we will do our best to answer any
37 questions that you might have. And I have a feeling
38 that probably a lot more of them will be answered by
39 the State counterparts, but we're here to -- for you.

40
41 Thank you.

42
43 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Did you have anything
44 to add, Mr. Suminski.

45
46 MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Chairman, no, not at
47 this point. I'm just here to -- in case there's some
48 -- I can help Jeff with answering other questions.

49
50

1 Thank you.
2
3 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Terry.
4
5 Are there any questions from the
6 Council.
7
8 (No comments)
9
10 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Are there any
11 questions from the Council online.
12
13 (No comments)
14
15 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Schroeder.
16
17 MR. SCHROEDER: Through the Chair.
18 Jeff, could you give us just a thumbnail of the --
19 which wolves are -- or wolves in which unit or units
20 are considered Alexander Archipelago wolves, subject to
21 -- by the various things that have been taking place
22 over the years concerning the ESA petitions.
23
24 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chairman. Mr.
25 Schroeder. I believe that the wolves across the
26 southern panhandle I believe are all considered in the
27 Archipelago wolf, but I -- I'd probably prefer maybe
28 the -- if someone from the State could answer that.
29 The State's the main researchers of the -- of wolves.
30
31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other questions
32 from the Council.
33
34 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman.
35
36 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Ms. Phillips.
37
38 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
39 Bangs.
40
41 So on page two, on Table 2, it shows
42 that the Federal hunt season and State hunt season that
43 in some cases the Federal hunt season is shorter than
44 the State hunt season. And I'm wondering why is that.
45 I thought we tried to keep them, you know, consistent.
46
47 Thank you.
48
49 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chair. Ms. Phillips.
50

1 Yes. You're correct in that.

2

3 For the most part, a lot of the seasons
4 do -- they do match. And in most exceptions, like Unit
5 2, there is the -- the extension is on the Federal side
6 of things. But when you notice probably, I believe
7 it's the Unit 3 State hunting season and a portion of
8 one has actually a -- the State hunting season is a
9 little longer. I'm not exactly sure why that is.
10 Those are State managed seasons there and so perhaps
11 someone from the State could, you know, address that.

12

13 It could have been through a Board of
14 Game request or something that I'm not sure, but that's
15 part of why this table was put together. Just to show
16 this Council that, you know, in some cases there are
17 some differences.

18

19 So thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Reeves.

22

23 Do you have a follow up, Ms. Phillips?

24

25 MS. PHILLIPS: So well where -- yes.
26 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

27

28 So where we're showing restriction we
29 should change that so it shows -- so it matches the
30 State season. But where it's liberal -- I mean adding
31 X time, we should just leave it alone.

32

33 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

36

37 Mr. Suminski.

38

39 MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Chairman, Terry
40 Suminski. There's a couple of things going on. One is
41 there's, you know, the back and forth between the Board
42 of Game. You know, some of these have gotten out of
43 synch. As they've changed their season, we've changed
44 our season. But -- I don't normally like to trust my
45 memory, but I know there are -- there were some
46 discussions at some Council meetings when we were
47 setting some of these wolf seasons that the Council
48 thought it through and wanted the shorter season. But
49 again I'm trusting my memory. I don't want to go much

50

1 farther than that, but I think the Council has put a
2 lot of due diligence into these seasons.

3
4 So -- but this would be a great time if
5 you wanted to submit a proposal to synch those seasons
6 with the State. And that would be a -- this would be a
7 good time.

8
9 Thank you.

10
11 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that,
12 Terry.

13
14 Ms. Phillips.

15
16 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. I would
17 agree with his last sentence, Mr. Chair.

18
19 Thank you.

20
21 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Are there any
22 other questions.

23
24 Ms. Needham.

25
26 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On
27 the Table 4 and Table 5 in the handout, Table 4
28 represents the wolf harvest across the region. Table 5
29 is harvest by method. And if you look at the totals,
30 they don't always match up. So I'm wondering if
31 there's another method that is -- that you know about
32 harvest that's not firearm, snare or trap.

33
34 For instance, like in 2012 the total
35 wolf harvest was 191 and on Table 5 it's 181.

36
37 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chairman, Ms. Needham.
38 Yeah. I did notice that as well when I was going
39 through this. And so after running the pivot table
40 that I used to create this, I kind of looked back at
41 some of the -- you know, the raw data in the Excel form
42 there. And there was some -- some harvests didn't show
43 with a method. So, you know, we're looking at like 11
44 years of data here. And so, you know, why something
45 didn't wind up in there, I don't know. But for the
46 most part, the data seems to, you know, report the
47 method of take in most cases.

48
49 So I don't know though. Some of these

50

1 years might also include another -- some other form of
2 mortality or something that was noted. I don't know.
3 But it's -- like I said, the State could probably
4 answer that better since it's their data.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Reeves.

7
8 Any other questions.

9
10 Ms. Needham.

11
12 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On
13 a different topic, on page eight the handout refers to
14 the InterAgency Technical Team, which is comprised of
15 the Fish and Game, the Forest Service, and the U.S.
16 Fish and Wildlife Service. And I was wondering whether
17 or not any of the subsistence Staff were involved in
18 that InterAgency Team.

19
20 MR. REEVES: Yeah, Mr. Chair, Ms.
21 Needham. I know that ideally -- and you'll get a
22 presentation on that committee later. I'm not a part
23 of it. No. I don't believe any of my other colleagues
24 in this room as well, but hopefully you'll -- you can
25 get more clarity when that item comes up.

26
27 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Any other
28 questions from the Council.

29
30 (No comments)

31
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none, thank
33 you, Mr. Reeves, Mr. Suminski.

34
35 What I'd like to do is have the -- at
36 this point have the State come up and discuss their
37 presentation on wolves. And then we'll take public
38 testimony after that if there's any public testimony.

39
40 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
41 And for the record, I'm Ryan Scott, the Regional
42 Supervisor with the Division of Wildlife Conservation.

43
44 I recognize that I do have a
45 presentation that I failed to give.

46
47 DeAnna, can we do that very quickly?

48
49 MS. PHILLIPS: I can't hear him.

50

1 MR. SCOTT: I just needed to -- I
2 realize I failed to give a presentation to DeAnna and I
3 wanted to see if we could do that quickly for the
4 Council.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. Will it just
7 take a few minutes or should we take a little break?

8
9 MR. SCOTT: It will take a minute.

10
11 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Oh, okay. Thank you,
12 Mr. Scott.

13
14 MR. OWEN: And please speak louder so
15 folks on the phone can hear.

16
17 MR. WRIGHT: Are we taking a little
18 break?

19
20 CHAIRMAN BANGS: No, Frank. We're just
21 getting some materials to the coordinator. So it will
22 just be a minute and then we'll resume.

23
24 MR. WRIGHT: Okay. Thanks.

25
26 (Pause)

27
28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Are we ready,
29 Mr. Scott.

30
31 MR. SCOTT: Yes, Mr. Chairman. And
32 again thank you. How's this. Yeah. It sounds better.
33 Perfect. All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
34 Members of the Council. Again, I'm Ryan Scott, with
35 the Department of Fish and Game.

36
37 And to my right -- and I'd like to
38 introduce Mr. Bruce Dale. He is the Director of the
39 Division of Wildlife Conservation and I'm very
40 appreciate that he was able to make it as we've had a
41 lot of discussion about wolves and I suspect that's
42 going to happen today as well.

43
44 His presentation will be pretty brief.
45 It's a lot of what you've already seen. We're going to
46 kind of fly through some of the things and just provide
47 some highlights from the past season and talk about
48 where we are presently.

49
50

1 Next slide, please.

2

3

4 And just an overview of the region.
5 When we're talking about wolf management in the region,
6 we do talk about Units 1 through 5.

6

7

8

9

10 Next one, please.
11 Wolves occur you can see there in Units
12 1, 2, 3, and 5. Unit 4 of course is the big islands,
13 Admiralty, Baranof, and Chichagof. There's a rough
14 estimate for the population in the region.
15 Historically, the highest densities have been right
16 here on Prince of Wales and the surrounding systems and
17 islands. And one of the questions that was recently
18 asked of Mr. Reeves, why is there a difference in the
19 -- some of the season dates, we extended the wolf
20 hunting season in a portion of the region in Units 1A
21 and 3 as a part of an intensive management program. We
22 added 30 days. And that -- those are the only two
23 places that that occurs in the region.

22

23

24

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As we all know, hunting and trapping takes the majority of the wolves. Trapping actually takes the majority of the wolves. We collect data through sealing -- mandatory sealing. In game management Unit 2 trappers need to present -- trappers and hunters need to present hides within 14 days of the harvest. The remainder of the region is 30 days after the harvest.

Another question was asked why the method of take -- the numbers didn't quite correspond to the total harvest. The reason is people simply don't record it. So it doesn't go into the database. And you can see we get about 156 wolves annually.

Next, please.

Real quick -- and I won't spend much time on this. Director Dale I believe will have some comments specific to ESA issues. You can see that the not warranted finding -- the Fish and Wildlife Service found that listing the species was not warranted. The three primary reasons: They didn't see this as a unique area for wolves. There wouldn't be a significant loss in the overall wolf population in the region. And the population does not markedly differ genetically from other wolves.

1 And this gets to the question that Mr.
2 Schroeder asked. When the Fish and Wildlife Service
3 took on the species status assessment, they looked at
4 wolves from Northern British Columbia all the way up to
5 Yakutat. So we treat those wolves all the same.

6
7 Some of the things that the Service did
8 point out to us -- you know, additional information
9 that would have been helpful to them certainly, you
10 know, and things that we would like to know, too. And
11 we discussed that in October as well. That we are --
12 we'd like to look at the genetic relatedness of wolves
13 across the region. Questions about what do wolves eat
14 in other places. In Unit 2 it's been demonstrated, you
15 know, fairly conclusively that deer is the primary prey
16 species. But other places like the mainland of
17 Southeast Alaska and place -- there's not a lot of
18 deer. But there are other things. Moose, goats, fish,
19 birds. And so we want to look at some additional prey
20 opportunities.

21
22 Deer habitat changes. We can't stray
23 very far from deer conversations when we have wolf
24 conversations, specifically in Unit 2. And then wolf
25 harvest management. Look at ways to make that
26 successful and to provide opportunity. And one of the
27 things I want to stress here is that both the State and
28 OSM and Federal users -- we want to provide that
29 opportunity into the future. And frankly want that
30 opportunity to grow. We'd like to see harvesting of
31 additional animals when it's time.

32
33 Next, please.

34
35 You got this from Mr. Reeves. I don't
36 think we need to spend too much time on it, but there
37 are, you know, some differences as well.

38
39 You can see that the majority of the
40 harvest -- intuitive for people who have trapped and/or
41 hunted wolves come later in the year, particularly
42 because pelts are prime and it's a good opportunity.
43 It's a good time of the year to get out and participate
44 in those activities.

45
46 Those early season hunts -- sorry.
47 Those early season harvests that you see there, those
48 are incidental to other types of hunting generally and
49 are taken by firearm. Up until December, the --
50

1 roughly five percent of the harvest is taken from
2 September, October, November. It's a very low
3 proportion of the overall harvest.

4

5 Next, please.

6

7 This is the harvest for Unit 2. You
8 can see that it started pretty high back in the mid
9 '90s. It certainly went down. And then last year a
10 total of nine wolves. This year a total of 28 wolves
11 sealed.

12

13 Next, please.

14

15 Again, just the harvest -- a history of
16 management actions that have been taken. This is the
17 same slide that you saw in Petersburg last fall, except
18 for a little bit more information for 2016 where the
19 population estimate was completed. The overall quota,
20 based on State regulations we are able to take up to 20
21 percent of the most recent estimate and that equated to
22 22 wolves. And as part of a discussion that we've had
23 and -- we reduced that to 11 wolves for the quota
24 that's coming up. And, you know, we ended up taking --
25 I see I have a typo there and I apologize -- 28 wolves
26 were harvested and sealed.

27

28 Next, please.

29

30 We know it's hard to count wolves here.
31 We've had a team of people that have been working on
32 it. And when I say team, it really is a team. Ms.
33 Gretchen Roffler leads our wolf research work and Mr.
34 Chris Larson out of Ketchikan spends quite a bit of
35 time on the island, using hair boards and scent lures
36 to bring wolves in, roll on the boards, collect the
37 hair, use the DNA. And from that we can do a mark
38 recapture analysis after we've identified individual
39 wolves and additional recaptures of additional wolves.

40

41 But getting back to the team part of
42 that is we have expanded this year. Working with
43 Hydaburg Cooperative Association. They received a
44 tribal grant from the Fish and Wildlife Service and
45 deployed people and hair boards out into the field.
46 And my understanding having talked to Ms. Roffler, it
47 worked well, you know, and that's great. And we also
48 increased the area that we were operating in on the
49 island.

50

1 And at this point we're sampling about
2 57 percent of the game management unit and that's
3 significant. That it provides -- you know, it just
4 gives us more confidence, better rigor when we go
5 through and do the analysis.

6
7 Next, please.

8
9 These were the estimates for the last
10 few years and as -- you know, in 2015 we had 108
11 wolves, with a range of course. And as an update for
12 this year, the field work has been completed. The
13 samples are in the lab as we speak and being processed.
14 That went through about the end of December. Started
15 late October and into December. And it's actually kind
16 of a neat graphic. It shows the new areas that have
17 been sampled -- as it flashes.

18
19 (Laughter)

20
21 MR. SCOTT: So we're in the process.
22 Again, like I said, the samples were collected.
23 They're being analyzed and we'll have that estimate
24 again.

25
26 Another point that we've talked about
27 over time is there a delay. You know, it's just --
28 it's part of the process. We get the hair when we can
29 and then it takes time to get it analyzed or get the
30 work in the lab done and then to get the data analyzed.
31 But the take home message I hope to convey is that we
32 believe this was a very successful season. I believe
33 we sent in 1,500 plus hair samples. Some of those will
34 turn out to be majority. You know, maybe wolves.
35 We're going to have other things in there that have to
36 get sorted out as well and then determine the number of
37 recaptures.

38
39 Next one, please.

40
41 And actually we could go back to the
42 last one and that's it. And that's all I have. And if
43 it pleases the Chair, I would ask Mr. Bruce to provide
44 any comments that -- or Mr. Bruce -- sorry. Mr. Dale
45 to provide any comments he would like.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.

48
49 Mr. Dale.

50

1 And I'm sorry. My voice is coming and
2 going.

3
4 MR. DALE: Sure. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
5 First off is I'd like to thank folks for giving me the
6 opportunity to come down here and sort of give the
7 department level view on this issue and as well as let
8 me hear your concerns directly. Staff has done a great
9 job of relating to me, you know, what's going on here
10 and what kind of problems there are, what kind of
11 issues you have, but there's nothing like firsthand
12 communication.

13
14 Most places I go to consult on wolf
15 management, most people want wolf populations that
16 provide good hunting and trapping opportunities, but
17 populations aren't so abundant that they affect the
18 prey populations -- the ungulate prey populations. And
19 that's pretty universal amongst at least hunters. And
20 it's interesting because in most cases they would like
21 to do it through hunting and trapping and regulate the
22 wolf population to a level where it's not in this case
23 affecting the deer population.

24
25 Everywhere I go in Alaska -- and most
26 of the places, but not all in the Lower 48 and other
27 provinces in Canada -- you can't do that. Here I think
28 you can. Why can't you do it. Because hunting and
29 trapping alone can't reduce the wolf population in most
30 places because of access to the degree where it will
31 not affect the prey population.

32
33 And so in Alaska, in our intensive
34 management programs, we go in there and reduce the wolf
35 population 80 percent in general. And when you take a
36 wolf population down to 20 percent of what it was
37 before, you can still hunt and trap them, but you don't
38 take very many. You know, it's just going to be less.
39 And so you can't really have both worlds.

40
41 But of all the places in Alaska that
42 I've worked -- and I've overseen these predator control
43 programs from the tip of the Alaska Peninsula to the
44 Canadian border and consulted on predator control, wolf
45 control almost exclusively -- some bear control, but as
46 far away as Manitoba and also coyote control and bear
47 control in Newfoundland for caribou. They don't have
48 wolves there. But this is a place where probably --
49 you know, we could -- I think almost certainly the wolf
50

1 population could be regulated to a level that would
2 provide both.

3
4 And I think that -- you know, I think
5 we can get there. But basically what we need at this
6 point is your help because, you know, we have this
7 cloud of the Endangered Species Act hanging over. We
8 expect litigation. Things change. Maybe it won't
9 happen. On the recent listing it was kind of a unique,
10 nuanced listing and whenever there's anything new, it
11 gets challenged. Especially when it comes to de-
12 listing of species.

13
14 And de-listing of wolves has been
15 especially troublesome. Great Lakes area wolves -- a
16 lot of them -- still listed. Still petitions. Wyoming
17 still doesn't have the authority in the State to manage
18 its wolves. You know, de-listing in Idaho and Montana
19 where basically for a decade there's been ten times the
20 number that it was supposed to be recoverable, which
21 was 100 wolves and ten breeding pairs. And it took a
22 Congressional action to get them de-listed. And
23 there's other species, too. It's really hard once they
24 get listed to get it back.

25
26 There's 7 million ringed seals in the
27 world and they're listed on the Endangered Species
28 List. And bearded seals are -- there's not as many of
29 them, but there's the same situation. And basically it
30 takes litigation, which we're ongoing -- involved in
31 and polar bears and critical habitat.

32
33 This summer we're going -- trying to
34 appeal to the Supreme Court to get those things
35 changed. So it's not trivial.

36
37 And there's two things. There's five
38 reasons a species can get listed. And there's two of
39 them that we, if we work together, can control. One is
40 over exploitation and the other one is failure of the
41 current regulatory process to adequately protect the
42 population. Now, if we want to write that management
43 plan that provides for abundant hunting and trapping,
44 but a population that's kept at a level where it
45 doesn't affect the deer population, I think we have to
46 show and demonstrate that we can rule out those two
47 factors. Over exploitation and inadequacy of
48 regulatory process.

49
50

1 We took that strategy at the Board of
2 Game meeting a few years ago and that's when we came up
3 with the new formula. And it was to prove this. To
4 take those two elements out from the listing decision.
5 So I think we need to demonstrate that. And at the
6 time, the actual year that the decision was made,
7 things were pretty good. It looked pretty good. And
8 we told them about all the outreach we'd done and that
9 sort of thing and those helped take those off the
10 table. We want to just take them off the table
11 completely and then we can do this.

12
13 We can do two things. We can do that
14 management plan where we have some reliable hunting and
15 trapping and keep the population at a level that we
16 want. And, you know, the other thing we can do
17 immediately when we feel comfortable with it is we can
18 double, you know, the -- what the quota is now in
19 regulation because we're taking that further step for
20 unreported human caused mortality.

21
22 And so when we double on the quota
23 system, that doesn't show that the regulatory process
24 is adequate. So what we really want to do is figure
25 out a way to work with you folks on Prince of Wales and
26 to speak to the other folks on the phone and hear from
27 other places. All the wolves in Southeast are
28 vulnerable to these petitions. They're in isolated
29 populations. They're in linear, narrow strips. If
30 they had done a better job of saying that there was a
31 threat to other places in Southeast, rather than just
32 the highest density of wolves that we know about, it
33 would have -- might have been a different story.

34
35 So, you know, what I'm doing here is
36 coming and asking for your help. Tell us how we can do
37 this and demonstrate this. That we have this under
38 control. We can take those two elements off the table.
39 In the meantime, we can start working on that
40 management plan. But we need to find a way to show
41 that, you know, the State of Alaska in conjunction with
42 the Forest Service can take those two elements off the
43 table.

44
45 And I think we can, you know, reach a
46 solution here that in most places we can't get. So,
47 you know, I'm personally kind of excited about that.
48 It's just we have to do pretty heavy handed stuff that
49 isn't -- you know, the local trappers don't like it

50

1 when we go in there and do wolf control because they've
2 got one of their main species kind of at a reduced
3 level for years while we fix things, you know, because
4 they also want, you know, abundant ungulates, moose and
5 caribou.

6
7 So that's basically sort of the
8 Department perspective and the strategy we took. And,
9 you know, they didn't get listed whether it was the
10 best strategy or not, but we're stuck with it now. I
11 made those decisions back at the time and now it's up
12 to us on what we're going to do going forward.

13
14 So that's sort of the Department level
15 perspective on things and I hope that helps clarify a
16 little bit of the constraints that I put on local
17 Staff. And I can't commend them enough for the job
18 they do.

19
20 But, you know, with that I'll answer
21 any questions. And my door is always open to any of
22 you individually or otherwise.

23
24 And thank you again for the
25 opportunity.

26
27 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much,
28 Mr. Dale.

29
30 Is there any questions from the
31 Council.

32
33 Mr. Douville.

34
35 MR. DOUVILLE: I had difficulty
36 understanding everything they were saying, but I'm kind
37 of in a unique situation. I'm a trapper and I hunt
38 also and I catch wolves. I'm also fully delegated to
39 represent the Tribe and I sit on this Council. So it
40 puts me in a different situation. I have comments,
41 perhaps questions or it's a multitude of things.

42
43 So it's -- for me it's difficult to
44 keep those all separate. So I have some things I could
45 say, but I don't know how to -- how do we proceed from
46 here.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
49 Douville. I think the proper way to proceed with your

50

1 personal comments or comments from the Tribe, that you
2 do a personal or a testimony -- public testimony. And
3 then we could have you sit up there and you could give
4 us separate from your Council position, if the
5 Council's okay with that. I think that would be the
6 proper way to address the Council with your own
7 concerns.

8
9 And as far as the questions for Mr.
10 Dale or Mr. Scott from a Council perspective, then now
11 would be the time for that.

12
13 MR. DOUVILLE: I don't think I have any
14 questions right now. I pretty much understand through
15 my conversations with them what they're doing. I do
16 have some I guess comment on perhaps a personal and
17 Tribal level that concerns me.

18
19 I'll address it at some point during
20 our meeting then.

21
22 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
23 Douville.

24
25 Anyone online have any questions from
26 the Council.

27
28 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair, this is
29 Patty.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Ms. Phillips.

32
33 MS. PHILLIPS: I would like to follow
34 up on Cathy's earlier question about that interagency
35 that they asked Mr. Reeves about. He said that it
36 would come up later.

37
38 CHAIRMAN BANGS: What I think we'll do,
39 Patty, is we'll go through the presentation and
40 questions right now and then we'll have some public
41 testimony and then we'll have questions. And I will ask
42 the State representatives and Terry and Jeff to stand
43 by for questions after we learn all the information
44 that's here. And I think the Tongass National Forest
45 Wolf Habitat Report, which was supposed to be -- it was
46 on our agenda, but it wasn't completed and we didn't
47 get a draft. And there's no one here that was part of
48 that presentation or working group to present anything
49 to us, so that will have to be at a future date when
50

1 they finish that report.

2

3 Does that answer your question, Patty?

4

5 MS. PHILLIPS: I think so.

6

7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Well, we do have Mr.
8 Wayne Owen online. I think he's still online. And he
9 may be able to answer questions.

10

11 Mr. Owen, do you have a comment?

12

13 MR. OWEN: I do not have a comment.
14 Although I have been briefed consistently about the
15 development of the program and when people have
16 questions I'm happy to respond in the voice of the
17 Regional Office.

18

19 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Owen.

20

21 Patty, did you have any questions that
22 you could direct to Mr. Owen?

23

24 MS. PHILLIPS: I was just following up
25 on Cathy's line. I think -- Cathy, where were you
26 going with your question?

27

28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Ms. Needham.

29

30 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In
31 the handout we received from the U.S. Forest -- well,
32 about the wolf management, on page 8 it said that the
33 direction of the Alaska Regional Forester and the
34 Tongass Forest Supervisor, an InterAgency Technical
35 Team consisting of members for -- from Fish and Game,
36 the Forest Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
37 Service have been meeting since March 2016 with the
38 objective of addressing the Forest Plan standard to
39 develop and implement a Wolf Habitat Management Program
40 for Game Management 2.

41

42 And my question is whether or not there
43 was any subsistence Staff representation on that
44 InterAgency Technical Team or if there were any
45 representatives regarding subsistence since wolves are
46 managed. So at this time maybe that question is best
47 directed towards Wayne since when I asked -- when the
48 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was here, I asked and
49 Mr. Reeves said that to the best of his knowledge no

50

1 subsistence representative was on that.

2

3 MR. OWEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There
4 were no members of that technical team that are
5 specifically assigned to the subsistence program for
6 the Forest Service and there were no members of the
7 team that were external to State or Federal government.
8 That means there were no RAC users, no subsistence
9 users. Right.

10

11

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Ms. Needham.

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MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Owen. I
guess as a follow up to that question is -- I don't
know the mechanism for this interagency review team,
but it seems to me that since subsistence is co -- it's
a shared quota and that we do, in terms of wolf
management from a harvest perspective, work with
regulations on that, that potentially a Regional
Advisory Council member could be a part of that team to
give recommendations or fill in and represent that
subsistence perspective on that interagency team.

And I understand that it's a technical
team making recommendations, but when it comes time to
implement the standards and guidelines of the Forest
plan, at this point in time I don't see the subsistence
voice being heard in that particular objective. And so
it would be -- Mr. Owen, I'd like if you could follow
up to find out whether or not it's possible to seat
somebody on such a team.

MR. OWEN: Madam Vice Chairman, thank
you for the question. There may be a misunderstanding
of the utilization of the paper that's supposed to be
done within the next month. And being some -- the
contents of this, you know, paper that, you know, we
worked on together for most of last year are there's
nothing that is required or regulatory in nature. The
document represents a lot of suggestions and ideas on
how to better manage habitat, which is what the Forest
Service is best at, so that deer populations are
sufficiently abundant to support, you know, wolf
populations throughout, you know, the management unit.

So absolutely 100 percent at any point
in the future where any of these recommendations are
actually incorporated into a Forest Service project,

1 every member of the public and specifically the
2 subsistence community will have an opportunity to talk
3 about the efficacy of the suggested methods and whether
4 they're a good idea or not to apply. But we
5 specifically did this in the terms of here are some
6 good ideas for managing habitat that promote deer and
7 wolves. And that's why it was not specifically
8 included in the Tongass plan revision because we -- you
9 know, this is sensitive stuff that we're trying to
10 learn about.

11
12 And so we have a group of -- we have a
13 series of recommendations about how to do our job
14 better, but we're not vetting this or, you know, this
15 is not a NEPA thing because it not a decision. It's
16 simply a set of tools that District rangers can use
17 when designing land management projects.

18
19 So I understand your concern. I just
20 want everybody to understand there's nothing in this
21 paper that's coming out that is required or puts
22 restrictions on anything. It is not a regulatory
23 process.

24
25 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Owen.

26
27 Ms. Needham, follow up.

28
29 MS. NEEDHAM: I just have one last
30 comment/recommendation. And that is with respect to
31 what Mr. Owen is talking about, if a Regional Advisory
32 Council representative can't participate in that
33 interagency team, that perhaps within the agency of the
34 U.S. Forest Service we have excellent subsistence
35 management biologists that should be participating when
36 that team is meeting to develop this wild wolf habitat
37 management program and also having wolf management meet
38 the standards and guidelines of the Forest plan.

39
40 It doesn't necessarily need to be a
41 Council member, but, you know, we as the Regional
42 Advisory Council work with and get a lot of feedback
43 from our biologists that sit here. And so having them
44 involved in that -- those discussions and being able to
45 put that subsistence perspective forward would be
46 beneficial I think to all of us in the long run.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms.
49 Needham.

50

1 MR. OWEN: Mr. Chair, in response to
2 Ms. Needham, I will certainly -- you know, my
3 obligation to you will be to bring that topic up with
4 the leadership of the Tongass National Forest.

5
6 In response, I will say though -- not
7 that that's a bad idea. I'm just going to say the
8 founding idea behind putting together the team was a
9 lot more about habitat management and not about
10 harvest. So it doesn't tell you by doing this you're
11 going to get X number more deer or wolves. Okay. So
12 that was the foundation.

13
14 I understand your question completely,
15 Ms. Needham. And I will make it my responsibility to
16 bring your concern up with the Tongass Forest
17 supervisor personally.

18
19 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Owen.

20
21 I have a question. This is on the
22 agenda and I think there's been -- you've been working
23 on it for a year and we still don't have it. And it
24 really disappoints me that here we've really been
25 working on coming to some conclusions about wolf
26 policies and a big portion of it's missing as far as
27 habitat report. And I just wanted to go on record that
28 I'm real disappointment in that management team to come
29 up with a document for us.

30
31 Is there anyone else that has any
32 questions.

33
34 Mr. Schroeder.

35
36 MR. SCHROEDER: Through the Chair. Mr.
37 Dale, first off I'd like to really thank you for coming
38 to our Regional Advisory Council meeting. And I was
39 thinking back. I've been on the Council for a few
40 years and then I was Staff at an earlier time and I'm
41 trying to remember the -- you may be one of the first
42 -- this may be one of the first times that we had a
43 commissioner for the Division of Wildlife Conservation.

44
45
46 I'm hoping that you can give me a
47 little bit of background. You were talking about the
48 aims of predator control programs in many parts of the
49 State to knock the wolf population down. 80 percent
50

1 was the figure that you used. So I understand that a
2 bit. Could you fill me in a little bit. Are there
3 other parts of the State where there's a pretty hard
4 quota on the number of wolves that may be taken by
5 hunting or trapping.

6
7 In other words, that you're doing
8 closures because say in Unit 13 that you set a
9 population objective and now you're getting too close
10 to it, so you knock it down. You know, you close the
11 season. That's an informational question.

12
13 MR. DALE: Thank you. Yes. There's no
14 other place in the State where we have quotas on
15 wolves. There's no other places in the State where
16 have quotas on wolves. And that's because -- I'll put
17 it into categories. For example, a lightly harvested
18 wolf population would be 10 to 15 percent of the
19 population. And a moderately harvested population
20 would be 15, 25 -- in that neighborhood to 30. And
21 then anything higher than that would be heavily
22 harvested. And throughout the State the best the
23 hunters and trappers can muster is moderately
24 harvested. And that's usually close to population
25 centers. For example, they get pretty close to
26 regulating wolves south of Fairbanks in Unit 20A.

27
28 Now, that probably does have a positive
29 impact on that moose population in terms of its ability
30 to produce ungulates for human -- food -- for food --
31 human use. But in most places you don't even get
32 close. And so that is what results in these predator
33 control programs which are designed to be temporary.
34 And the reason they're designed to be temporary is
35 because they don't provide for abundant hunting and
36 trapping opportunity. They provide for reduced hunting
37 and trapping opportunity.

38
39 So we do in there and the
40 recommendation was made by actually the National
41 Academy of Sciences, a report commissioned by the
42 governor in the mid '90s that said the effective
43 programs in the Yukon and Alaska were programs that
44 took the population down to 20 percent for four or more
45 years. But those were all temporary and designed to be
46 temporary. And then you grow the prey population up a
47 little bit and the wolf numbers come back. And the
48 wolf numbers are higher. And then because of some
49 scale, then the wolves don't have as big an affect on
50

1 the prey population, so you get abundant harvests of
2 both species.

3
4 And that's, you know, basically been
5 sort of a 30-year pattern in some of those areas that
6 had wolf control back in the '80s. And then since then
7 we've had -- we've brought other populations to
8 population objectives through those methods. Doesn't
9 always work. Sometimes it creates as many problems as
10 it fixes, but it's a sound management tool used
11 worldwide for management.

12
13 Now, the main thing about Prince of
14 Wales is that, you know, it's pretty convincing
15 evidence that hunters and trappers can because of
16 access and skill and everything else regulate this wolf
17 population at a level that would, you know, not affect
18 the deer population inordinately and provide for
19 abundance of both. And that's a really unique
20 situation and I think that's where I would guess most
21 people want to go, except the people that don't like
22 hunting and trapping of wolves. And so we can -- we
23 think we can get there.

24
25 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Follow up.

26
27 MR. SCHROEDER: Well, Mr. Dale, I'm
28 glad you recognize that Prince of Wales has some really
29 good wolf trappers. And I don't know if we can export
30 them to other parts of the State where you might need
31 them, but I'm -- I don't know if I have an exact
32 question here, but I'm a little frustrated. I've been
33 around this issue for at least 20 years. And, you
34 know, we get progressively restrictive on the
35 subsistence hunters and trappers on Prince of Wales and
36 I'm wondering whether there's some pathway out of that,
37 where we could get management back to something more of
38 the Statewide standard which is not setting such hard
39 limits on trappers.

40
41 Because as you know, we obviously have
42 a different access situation on the island here.
43 Prince of Wales has been the sacrificial island for
44 timber in Southeast Alaska, so those are different
45 situations than you have elsewhere. However, trapping
46 also isn't really very easy and access -- even though
47 there is access on Prince of Wales, this does not mean
48 that all areas can be trapped effectively. Forest
49 Service has gone through a program of closing roads for
50

1 access specifically to protect both predator and prey
2 situations.

3
4 So I'm wondering if you or Mr. Scott
5 see some pathway -- perhaps not immediately -- out of
6 this situation where we have essentially what I'd call
7 an intensive management of hunters rather than an
8 intensive management of wolves.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 MR. DALE: Thank you. That's a real
13 good question and, you know, I have to be careful about
14 providing too much sunshine. It might stand out,
15 especially down here.

16
17 You know, one of the things that
18 happens everywhere is you build it and they will come.
19 And so that's what I alluded to a minute ago when I
20 said sometimes it creates more problems than it fixes.
21 When you have a situation where there's abundant
22 hunting and trapping, you get more people. And so you
23 get more competition, you get more user conflicts. And
24 that -- I just wanted to make sure that that's
25 understood. That that's the pattern that we see
26 elsewhere as well.

27
28 I think the pattern out of this is to
29 find a way to work together so that we can show the
30 world that we can manage this population. And then
31 that will result in fewer restrictions, higher quotas.
32 And I don't know if we'll ever get beyond quotas on
33 Prince of Wales, but that would be -- you know, it's
34 possible.

35
36 The way out of this is we establish
37 that we can manage the populations and we can prevent
38 over-exploitation and that the regulatory process is
39 adequate. We work on a management plan that perhaps
40 has three levels. This is a common management plan we
41 use for ungulates and predators in other places, too.
42 So when every now and then, you know, feedback,
43 trapping success, that sort of thing. We have a low
44 population situation, we'd have a season and bag for
45 that. And then a medium population, we'd have a season
46 impact bag for that. When the wolf population is high,
47 you'd have a season length and bag limit for that.

48
49 You know, a season-long bag limit that
50

1 everybody could try and reach and share. This is
2 something -- this is how you guys want to manage it in
3 the future rather than a quota, if that's the issue.
4 There's a lot of ways out of it. We just have to start
5 that planning process, which as I also said earlier, we
6 could start today, but it has to be with the
7 understanding that we could take those two off the
8 table. Because we wouldn't implement that management
9 plan until we can take those off the table. Because
10 it's going to be less restrictive and that's going to
11 invite petitions for listing and other criticism.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Follow up, Mr.
14 Schroeder.

15
16 MR. DALE: Mr. Scott has some to add to
17 that, too. I'm sorry.

18
19 MR. SCHROEDER: My final question is a
20 pretty specific one for Mr. Scott. And it has to do
21 with the unreported harvest. And, you know, it wasn't
22 very long ago that we didn't have things like the DNA
23 work that has been done. That's just -- and, you know,
24 I congratulate you on getting that program working and
25 working with trappers on Prince of Wales with that
26 program to get quite a few wolves identified.

27
28 It would seem to me that because you
29 are looking at individual wolves, that you have
30 something way better than innuendo or hearsay about
31 unreported harvest. And so I'm wondering what recent
32 data, meaning in the last few years, might be around
33 that justifies estimate of 50 percent unreported
34 harvest. Because that really rankles people who have
35 really been trying to cooperate with the system and
36 make it work, but then all of a sudden 50 percent of
37 the allowable take disappears.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Scott.

40
41 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member
42 Schroeder, thank you for the question. And again this
43 has been a topic that we've talked about quite a bit.

44
45 So historically, we've used data from
46 radio collared animals that have turned up dead. And
47 that was -- that ranged 30 percent up to 47 percent in
48 that range. I believe in Petersburg we discussed, you
49 know, X number of wolves that we had high confidence

50

1 that were killed. Either we had the bodies or the
2 hunters came to talk to us about it. Told us what had
3 happened. And so those are the data points that we
4 use. That we use really to establish a 50 percent.

5
6 In addition to that, we approached the
7 last two seasons very conservatively. You know, that
8 was a driving force as well to essentially show the
9 world, if you will, that we see this -- these changes
10 in estimates and we know people are concerned about it.
11 We want to be conservative with the harvest, but I -- I
12 also -- I want to stress very strongly that we want
13 there to be harvest. We want to provide that
14 opportunity as well.

15
16 This is a -- the 50 percent is an
17 ongoing discussion for sure. Myself and Member
18 Douville have talked about it a lot and it is something
19 that I think, you know, we need to really look hard at
20 and think about what we can do to get away from it
21 really. To provide that additional opportunity.

22
23 And I want to make another statement.
24 And certainly, please, if I didn't answer your
25 question, you know, make sure that I come back to it.
26 As Director Dale pointed out, we can start today, you
27 know, by working on how to move forward and dig out of
28 this. You know, dig out of this situation that we're
29 all in. Frankly, I think we've already started. And
30 part of that has been with discussions with some of the
31 Council Members, talking about ideas of how to move --
32 you know, how to move forward and what would be -- I
33 wouldn't even say so much that it's conceptual.

34
35 You know, we've talked about things
36 that -- what are actual possibilities on how to manage
37 this wolf population. And if you will recall, earlier
38 I had mentioned, you know, this is a team effort. Fish
39 and Game, the Forest Service, Hydaburg, teachers here
40 in Craig, members of the RAC -- specifically Mr.
41 Douville, that we've begun that conversation. I think
42 that it's time to -- A, we need to continue that
43 conversation. B, it's time to move forward with it.

44
45 And, you know, Mr. Douville -- Member
46 Douville had several suggestions for that. And I think
47 there's some -- there are some things in there that'll
48 work. We are going to have to work together on it.
49 You know, that's -- we are in this situation together

50

1 and we're going to have to move forward together.

2

3 And to finish that up or to wrap it up,
4 I didn't quite follow all of the administrative
5 information about, you know, proposals can't be put
6 forward. But myself and Mr. Schumacher and Mr. Porter
7 and Director Dale -- I mean we're here. And we're
8 ready to talk about those, you know, proposals if
9 there's, you know, interest in that and ideas to move
10 forward.

11

12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

13

14 Ms. Needham.

15

16 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17

18 Mr. Scott, is the monitoring work that
19 you're doing through my understanding in cooperation
20 with the Hydaburg Cooperative Association -- that -- is
21 it going to be going on this next season? Is the
22 department funded to continue doing work in Unit 2
23 specifically for doing the hair board research?

24

25 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member
26 Needham, we have not settled on exactly what the plans
27 are for the upcoming year as far as field work for
28 essentially anybody. The intent though is to continue
29 to do work on Prince of Wales. And I don't want to say
30 100 percent, you know, but it is very, very likely. We
31 just haven't finalized those plans.

32

33 As I believe that -- I believe that
34 Hydaburg got an additional award for additional work in
35 the coming years on wolf sample collection and so that
36 would -- you know, that's great. It worked well. And
37 I think it was a good opportunity for a whole bunch of
38 people to get -- come together, you know, on this
39 issue. So it is very likely. We haven't finalized
40 those plans yet.

41

42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

43

44 Follow up, Cathy.

45

46 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47

48 So in follow up to that, I guess I just
49 asked about next year. And my understanding is that

50

1 eventually you won't have the funding to continue the
2 research that you're doing with the hair board for
3 developing a population estimate. And so what is the
4 projected plan for -- I know Hydaburg was funded like
5 you mentioned, but not at -- they were funded at a
6 level to cooperate, not take over that research or even
7 read or -- there's not enough funding for them to do
8 the amount of effort that the Department puts into it.

9
10 So if you discontinue doing the genetic
11 sampling, what would be the next mechanism for creating
12 a population estimate in order to develop the quota in
13 the future once your research is concluded?

14
15 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member
16 Needham, so I think the -- my first response is we're
17 not planning on stopping. What we might do is change
18 the interval that we come and do this on. And the
19 project has already begun to switch from a research
20 centric process. We've figured out how to do it now.
21 That we've started to use it and it's in a management
22 context. And the intent is to take that from again a
23 big research focus down to a very applicable management
24 tool.

25
26 And to do that, you know, it -- I would
27 defer to Director Dale, as someone who's had much more
28 wolf experience than I. We don't need to be here
29 necessarily every year to count wolves. We can do it
30 every three years, maybe even every five years and to
31 operate off that quota. At the same time, you know,
32 we're having discussions about having a -- how we
33 establish that quota may slide on a scale. You know,
34 things like that.

35
36 So there's some lingering questions,
37 but the intent is to continue to do it. It's just at
38 what intensity do we continue to do it. You know,
39 right now I don't think any of us would disagree that,
40 you know, we need to keep doing it. We need to get an
41 annual one at this point, you know, to help bolster
42 where us, as a group, everybody that's been involved in
43 this, is moving. So.....

44
45 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

46
47 Any other questions for Mr. Dale or Mr.
48 Scott.

49
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1 (No comments)

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CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Dale, do you have
a comment?

MR. DALE: If there's no other
questions, I did want to add to that. And it's just
something that Staff pointed out that was an issue of a
concern. And it's the -- you know, the population
estimate in general and whether it's an accurate area
covered. That's something that's been expanded. Doing
the best we can. There's going to be limitations on
that I think no matter what methodology you use.

The other thing is the lag. You know,
that it's last year's estimate and this year's
population of wolves. And that's a real thing. There
no doubt about it. But I've been racking my mind to
think of other highly managed populations where that's
not the case. It's basically a tentative of wildlife
and even fisheries management. I mean I think that
king salmon limit went to one per day down here. I
know it did in Petersburg. And that's based mostly on
last year's information and previous information to
that. Even areas where we set cow/moose hunts, which
of course are highly controversial up in the Interior,
every year and get quotas from that, frequently we
don't have current year information even.

So the lag -- and most everyday stuff
is -- you know, you count moose if you're lucky in
October and if there's a quota and you decide on it
then for the next fall. And for caribou you count the
caribou in mid-summer and you get some later
information after the fall part of the hunt. There
might be a winter hunt. And you decide on quotas for
that next year, too. So that's basically how it works
when we have -- we don't have near the sophistication
or even the need for sort of in-season sort of
adjustments like you do on a terminal fishery or
something like that.

So I wanted to touch on those, too.
And then the last thing, too, is we've talked about the
unreported -- I wouldn't even say harvest. I like to
say human cause mortality because it includes wounding
loss, which happens everywhere and we hope at a low
rate and, you know, we use education and everything to
minimize it and that sort of thing. Includes a lost

1 trap that, you know, the most diligent person in the
2 world who's put out a lot of traps has lost a trap. I
3 know I have. And you always wonder about that. You
4 know, is it still out there fishing or not or -- and,
5 you know, that's human error and we're humans it turns
6 out. So those kinds of things.

7
8 But, you know, what we can do now, too,
9 is that when we set a quota we have to improve our
10 communication or whatever it is to make sure that we
11 can meet that quota. That's the part where we have --
12 it's just uncertainty about the harvest. There's
13 uncertainty about the population. We can measure that.
14 And then we have problems with covering the right area
15 or not. There's some uncertainty there. But right now
16 uncertainty about the harvest and whether we can
17 regulate it or not is what remains high. I mean from
18 all the reports I've gotten the egregious kind of
19 unreported take is -- most people get it now that
20 that's not an acceptable thing that's going to be in
21 their benefit in the long run.

22
23 And so, you know, we're really moved
24 past that. We're going to move past all of this. But
25 we need to be able to demonstrate it. Thanks.

26
27 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for those
28 comments, Mr. Dale.

29
30 Any more questions from the Council.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any questions from
35 Council Members that are online.

36
37 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes, Mr. Chair.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Ms. Phillips.

40
41 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
42 Bangs. So I think it was -- I don't even remember --
43 probably in 2014 we -- the Council took action to
44 support a reduction in the wolf take on Unit 2, I
45 believe it was. And it was in reaction to the listing
46 or the proposed listing. And now it's my understanding
47 -- and correct me if I'm wrong -- that the wolf is not
48 being listed.

1 And so I mean I don't know what I'm
2 trying to say, but is the current recommended harvest
3 going to stay in place even though it's been determined
4 that the wolf was not listed or can we go back to I
5 think it was a 30 percent of estimated harvest or quota
6 or population or are we going to stay at the 20 percent
7 or what. You know, what is the long -- either a long
8 term plan or what might happen. I mean because it went
9 from a no limit previously for years and years and
10 years. And then there was harvest during time of
11 timber harvest because there were a lot more people out
12 and doing opportunistic take. And then the harvest on
13 POW -- the timber harvest on POW significantly reduced
14 or was virtually nonexistent. While it's nowhere near
15 where it was in the past and so now that opportunistic
16 take is significantly reduced.

17
18 And so I mean, you know, we have these
19 cumulative impacts that are no longer -- you know, that
20 we're trying to address here and still meet subsistence
21 needs on the island. So what is the status of this
22 only 20 percent of estimated population.

23
24 Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Ryan.

27
28 MR. SCOTT: Thank you. I answer to
29 lots of stuff. No worries.

30
31 (Laughter)

32
33 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
34 Through the Chair. Member Phillips, I think you just
35 encapsulated everything exactly right. You know, I
36 think that's the discussion that I hope -- you know, I
37 believe we've begun and that I hope will continue, is
38 to see, you know, where that goes.

39
40 For the State side of this equation, as
41 far as the regulatory -- the regulations go, the next
42 scheduled Board of Game meeting for Southeast Alaska is
43 I believe January of 2019. This time of year next year
44 we'll be accepting proposals. You know, potentially
45 there are mechanisms to get there earlier. I don't
46 know that -- I mean we have criteria as well if we try
47 to do things out of cycle. I don't know that we could
48 get there with this particular issue, but we're -- you
49 know, it's going to be here before we know it. We're

50

1 rapidly coming up on a regular Southeast Alaska Board
2 of Game cycle.

3
4 In terms of, you know, our involvement
5 and our relationship with the RAC and OSM and Federal
6 regulations, we're -- yeah, we're ready. You know,
7 we're ready to identify how to move this forward. And
8 I don't want to put a pin in 20 percent, 30 percent.
9 You know, you say it and then you've got to live with
10 it kind of thing or, you know, dig yourself out of it.
11 I don't know what the number would be. But I do know
12 that there's opportunity to do things to ensure that
13 people in game management Unit 2 that want to hunt deer
14 and want to hunt and trap wolves, that we can -- you
15 know, we can address those issues.

16
17 So it is in place right now. I believe
18 the Federal Subsistence Board is coming into their
19 wildlife proposal cycle and we're rapidly coming into a
20 Board of Game cycle and so it's -- this is the
21 opportunity.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.

24
25 Any follow up there, Ms. Phillips?

26
27 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes, Chairman Bangs. My
28 question is to you, I guess. Is that can the Council
29 -- the Regional Council put a proposal through that
30 would advance this change a year before the State does?
31 And, you know, is that something we could actually do?
32 Over.

33
34 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms.
35 Phillips.

36
37 I'm not really sure on the timing of
38 how a proposal would fit into the program, but I think
39 we should look at that and maybe we could draft a
40 proposal at this meeting, if that's the will of the
41 Council. And it won't go on the Register, so it won't
42 go anywhere for the time being, but we're all here
43 together and if that's your wishes, we could discuss it
44 with the rest of the Council Members and proceed from
45 there.

46
47 Is that a sufficient answer, Patty?

48
49 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes. Thank you.

50

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. We'll be
2 discussing request for proposals for wildlife here a
3 little bit later in the meeting and we'll also be
4 discussing a fisheries proposal, so we'll address this
5 at a little bit later time in the meeting. So we'll be
6 able to address it then.

7
8 So is there any other questions from
9 members online for Mr. Dale or Mr. Scott.

10
11 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chair, this is Albert.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. Go ahead.

14
15 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
16 My question is how is the management plan being
17 received, and in my personal opinion I believe
18 (indiscernible - distortion) I believe Mr. Douville's
19 voice should be heard and considered as part of the
20 management plan. I'm a firm believer that local and
21 traditional knowledge seems to have a lot of weight
22 behind it. And I guess that's my question. Is his
23 voice being considered as part of the management
24 planning. And also agree with the other Board Members
25 that would like to see (indiscernible - distortion)
26 represented as part of that management plan. And even
27 more so someone from the region when that management
28 plan is being put together should be a part of that
29 plan.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for those
32 comments.

33
34 Did you have a response or.....

35
36 (No comments)

37
38 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Thank you.

39
40 Thank you, Mr. Howard.

41
42 MR. HOWARD: Oh, Mr. Chair. I was
43 wondering if he was being received when they talk about
44 the management plan. It sounds really good in theory
45 and I'm pretty impressed by it, but I've also heard
46 that -- to give you an example, Mr. Chair, we've been
47 trying to solve the salmon problem and it seems to be
48 heading in the direction that I, myself, and other
49 Council members here in the community have seen it

50

1 (indiscernible - distortion) but it has not been
2 addressed properly. And in a time of decline and
3 continues in that direction, you know, our voices
4 weren't heard. So I would like to see if it's possible
5 to get someone as a part of that management plan that's
6 from that region on it. There are people in that area
7 that know this forwards and backwards better than I do
8 and I'd rather see one of them on the management plan
9 when trying to consider -- to give you an example,
10 trying to consider whether or not to put Albert on
11 there, to me, I think it's important that someone from
12 that region is a part of that management plan and part
13 of that team.

14

15 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Howard.

16

17 Mr. Scott, did you have a comment?

18

19 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20

21 You know, as we -- I think we might be using
22 terminology interchangeable. You know, at present we
23 don't have a wolf management plan for game management
24 Unit 2. There's been interest expressed in that.
25 We've even just in the last few minutes talked about,
26 you know, some of the things that we need to work on
27 and that's something that we can get to.

28

29 I certainly -- before I would engage in
30 a wolf management plan, a harvest management plan, wolf
31 biology management plan, yeah. I mean I would come to
32 this body. And who you choose, you know, I think the
33 RAC and -- and if it's Mr. Douville, you know, he's
34 pretty involved in it anyway. You know, it's somebody
35 that we've been having conversations with as well. But
36 certainly the RAC has to be involved.

37

38 I mean it -- A, it's the right thing to
39 do. B, two managing agencies here. You guys are in --
40 you know, you're very closely related to the Forest
41 Service and you represent the users of, you know, both
42 the deer resources and the wolf resources. So
43 certainly as we engage in that, if we get down that
44 road, I can assure you that I will talk to the RAC and
45 ask for your help.

46

47 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

48

49 Any other questions.

50

1 (No comments)
2
3 MR. OWEN: Mr. Chairman.
4
5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes.
6
7 MR. OWEN: This is Wayne, Forest
8 Service in Juneau again.
9
10 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Owen.
11
12 MR. OWEN: I just want to re -- sort of
13 emphasize what Mr. Scott said.
14
15 The Forest Service has not and is not
16 developing a management plan for wolves. The document
17 that you've been discussing is simply an outline of
18 tools that can be used to manage habitat in the future.
19 And the Forest Service greatly values its cooperation
20 with the State on wolf issues, but, you know, let's
21 please keep in mind that -- you know, that population
22 regulation is still the purview of the State. And the
23 subsistence program has a lot to do about setting
24 harvest limits and providing priority for rural users,
25 but we have not developed a plan.
26
27 And I'm 100 percent behind my
28 colleagues at the State Fish and Game Department.
29
30 If we were to move forward with a plan,
31 the subsistence users, you know, and everyone else
32 would have to be necessarily involved, you know, in
33 that discussion through a number of lines, starting
34 with Tribal consultation and then working through the
35 subsistence program and with all the member of the
36 public that are potentially affected by any plan.
37
38 But to be hard and certain about this,
39 we have not and we do not intend at this moment to
40 develop a plan for wolf management.
41
42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Owen.
43
44 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chair, this is Albert.
45
46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Howard.
47
48 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
49 It's interesting that Mr. Owen states the fact that he
50

1 works close with the State agencies but no mention of
2 the executive order that I had mentioned, tribal
3 consultation and coordination of the tribal
4 governments. Tribal governments exercise sovereign
5 powers over their members and territory. This is an
6 executive order that comes from, you know, basically
7 our boss, the, you know, Federal Board. So it's
8 interesting that that statement is being made. I've
9 dealt with Mr. Owen on a different level.

10

11 So, you know, maybe a management plan
12 should be recommended by this Board to put something in
13 place that (indiscernible - distortion) as conservation
14 as they're doing in Unit 5 when it concerns the moose,
15 and I believe that local tribes should have some say in
16 what's happening there. So his comment even makes it
17 more concerning that it appears that there really isn't
18 any hard data supporting it when you're looking at a
19 wolf population, you know, this is common practice
20 along Southeast Alaska and I'm not sure if it's the
21 same one that comes through (indiscernible -
22 distortion) but this is kind of where we're at and
23 there's no management plan from the Federal agencies
24 that support the State's take on resource.

25

26 When they divvy up a resource between
27 users groups it seems to me the subsistence user always
28 falls short of their goal to sustain themselves.

29

30 So, you know, I'd like to see a
31 management plan come from the Federal agency with hard
32 numbers from all user groups and to include traditional
33 knowledge of someone that's on the ground all the time.

34

35 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

36

37 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Howard.

38

39 MR. OWEN: Mr. Chair.

40

41 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Mr. Owen. Do you
42 have a comment?

43

44 MR. OWEN: Just one final thing. I
45 will remind or tell the Council if they didn't know
46 that the Forest Service and the State of Alaska did
47 jointly hold a tribal consultation on wolf management
48 on Prince of Wales Island fall.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much,
2 Mr. Owen, for clarifying that.

3
4 I would like to point out or address a
5 question to Mr. Scott that as Patty Phillips alluded to
6 a little while ago with the changing habitat in the
7 Unit 2 because of the change in logging practices, does
8 that have a big factor in the -- that you've noticed in
9 the wolf population changes?

10
11 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
12 No. We haven't detected that. But in looking at a
13 much bigger picture view, you know, again we can't get
14 too far away from deer when we start talking about
15 wolves and, you know, over time the habitat's going to
16 change. So that's really how we view that.

17
18 And, you know, harvest looks very good
19 right now. Certainly, I've had conversations where
20 people have found it difficult to find deer. Overall
21 harvest looks pretty good. I was very interested in
22 hearing, you know, potential proposals from the
23 gentleman from Klawock this morning, you know, as well
24 just thinking about deer numbers as well. And that's
25 where the habitat component of that comes in, is making
26 sure that into the future that the habitat can support
27 deer, which de facto supports the wolves.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

30
31 Are there any other questions.

32
33 (No comments)

34
35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. I know Mr.
36 Dale has to leave here this afternoon; is that right.
37 And the wind's coming down. Okay. It would be great
38 if you guys would be available for questions.

39
40 Do you have a comment, Mr. Scott?

41
42 MR. SCOTT: Yes, Mr. Chairman. We will
43 be here. Myself and Mr. Schumacher and Mr. Porter will
44 be here through the end of the meeting. In addition,
45 you had a presentation about brown bear management, so
46 if there's questions or discussion on that, I'm happy
47 to take those as well.

48
49 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

50

1 I'd like to tell the Council Members
2 that are listening in that the presentation that Mr.
3 Scott presented to us -- the power point -- Ms. Perry
4 has emailed it to you so that you can you review it
5 and, you know, get a little visual on it. So I just
6 wanted to let you know that that's there.

7
8 And I think it's -- well, I really want
9 to get to public testimony, but I think we probably
10 should break for lunch. And then we'll come back
11 afterwards unless there's any other questions for Mr.
12 Scott or Mr. Dale.

13
14 (No comments)

15
16 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Then I think we'll
17 break and come back at 1:00 o'clock. And then we'll
18 carry on with testimonies for wolf management or
19 anything to do with the wolves, we'll take public
20 comments.

21
22 Thank you.

23
24 (Off record)

25
26 (On record)

27
28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I'd like
29 everyone to take their seats so that we can resume.
30 Okay. We're going to open up the meeting here with
31 some public testimony in regards to wolf management.

32
33 And I want to have everybody that's
34 online identify themselves again so we can make sure we
35 know who's online and what Council Members we have.

36
37 Could you introduce yourselves, the
38 people that are online.

39
40 MR. WRIGHT: Yeah. This is Frank
41 Wright.

42
43 MS. PHILLIPS: Hi, Frank. It's Patty
44 Phillips.

45
46 MR. HERNANDEZ: Don Hernandez.

47
48 MR. OWEN: Wayne Owen.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I think that I
2 heard Mr. Howard. It might have been walked on a
3 little bit there.

4
5 Are you there, Albert?

6
7 (No comment)

8
9 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Okay. Thank
10 you all.

11
12 Okay. The first up for public
13 testimony is Mr. Jon Bolling.

14
15 MR. BOLLING: Good afternoon, Mr.
16 Chairman. My name is Jon Bolling. I'm the city
17 administrator for the City of Craig. I want to thank
18 the Council for scheduling it's March meeting for Craig
19 and Prince of Wales to hear the concerns of folks
20 living there in Game Unit 2. It's appreciated.

21
22 I'm here to talk about wolf management
23 today. And I'll start out by saying the City of Craig
24 supports the higher sustainable harvest level possible
25 of wolves in Game Unit 2. The most recent information
26 indicates that wolf populations are increasingly at a
27 healthy level. And I'll start it out -- before I make
28 my three points I'll start out with a little background
29 information.

30
31 In preparation for the 2014, 2015
32 season, State and Federal game managers out of an
33 abundance of caution wisely lowered the Game Unit 2
34 wolf quota to 25 animals. While the State of Alaska's
35 subsequent lowering regulation of the harvest level
36 from 30 percent to 20 percent did not have the support
37 of locals, the practice of lowering the harvest for
38 2014 and 2015 to a level approximating 20 percent was
39 supported by comments that ADF&G received at local
40 public meetings, some of which took place right here in
41 this room.

42
43 Well, later a more conservative joint
44 quota of just nine wolves was established the following
45 year and for the season just ended 2016, 2017, a low
46 harvest level of 11 animals was set. Although I must
47 say it was done without the prior year's practice of
48 consultation and public meetings that we enjoyed in
49 2014. With this in mind, the City wishes to emphasize
50

1 three points in our comments today.

2
3 First, is regarding wolf population
4 itself. The projected population estimates have
5 fluctuated wildly, as you know, in recent years,
6 ranging from 221 animals in 2013 to just 89 in 2014.
7 And obviously it's highly unlikely that the 132 count
8 difference in animals between those two estimates can
9 be attributed to wolf mortality in just the year that
10 separated those estimates. Changing population
11 estimation techniques contributed to the wide range.
12 It's also likely that trapping activities in an
13 analysis area during 2013, 2014 regulatory year
14 affected the subsequent fall's population estimate.

15
16 In addition, a lack of documentation of
17 active dens and litters in 2015 by managers likely
18 contributed to those managers subsequent low population
19 estimate. For the 2015 spring field season apparently
20 only one active den with just a single pup was found in
21 the study area. However, both these indicates have
22 changed since 2015. And they've changed in the
23 following two ways.

24
25 The first is the general increase in
26 wolf population. Those populations are demonstrably
27 higher now than they were in the fall of 2015. This is
28 so because managers raised the quota from 18 to 22
29 animals based on increasing population data showing
30 higher density of wolves in the game unit, which was
31 then extrapolated to the game unit. This change stems
32 from a 20 percentage point increase in both the
33 aggregate population and the season quota. This
34 increase is consistent with managers beliefs that wolf
35 density would be higher following the 2014 estimates.

36
37 There's also been an increase in active
38 dens and litters. It's our understanding that the
39 third party trail camera evidence collected recently
40 has documented four litters in the game unit. And
41 we're also told that efforts by Fish and Game have
42 documented an additional four litters, including twelve
43 pups in Game Unit 2. And the presence of eight litters
44 represents a significant increase in the documented
45 recruitment from the paucity of dens and litters that
46 were found in 2015.

47
48 Now, based on typical reported litter
49 sizes, eight litters of average size amount to between
50

1 40 and 48 pups. But even a more conservative estimate
2 of pups per litter say only half the document average
3 still results in 20 to 24 pups for just the dens and
4 litters where documentation is available. And it's
5 unlikely that the third party efforts and ADF&G efforts
6 were able to find and document all the litters and dens
7 in Game Unit 2.

8
9 I want to turn now to the mortality
10 policy that the managers have implemented here in Game
11 Unit 2 over the last couple of seasons. I will say
12 that reductions to overall wolf quota caused by
13 unreported human cause mortality are an appropriate
14 management tool. However, I think implementation of a
15 preemptive reduction of half the wolf quota over what
16 it would otherwise be results in a loss to subsistence
17 use that is really done without sufficient
18 justification.

19
20 I think the wholesale reductions of the
21 quota in 2015 and 2016 by one half were made as a
22 cautious conservation effort by game managers, but it's
23 also true that past documented references to the
24 uncertainties of illegal harvest -- or excuse me. Past
25 reductions to harvest were based on actual documented
26 mortalities typically recorded as a result of the radio
27 collar studies that were mentioned earlier today.

28
29 But even those studies acknowledged
30 that while almost half of the collared wolves were
31 taken illegally between 1993 and 2002. That illegal
32 take amounted to an average of about 3.4 animals per
33 year. That liberal take is far below the 50 percent
34 reduction to the harvest limit set by game managers for
35 the current and prior game years.

36
37 Now, lacking the scientific
38 investigation needed to estimate alleged illegal
39 harvest and the rising population of wolves and strong
40 recruitment numbers have been document in the last
41 field season. They support increasing the allowable
42 quota of wolves rather than decreasing it. It's
43 apparent that the game managers are using anecdotal
44 information to reduce the quota, but don't appear to be
45 willing to use anecdotal data that's at least as
46 compelling to set the quota at higher levels.

47
48 And finally, there's really a need for
49 more precise local input.

50

1 As I mentioned, the process used to set
2 the quota in 2016, 2017 lacked the public process
3 evident in the prior years. I think State and Federal
4 managers did a good job of soliciting input that
5 supported the 2014 regulatory quota of 25 animals. A
6 similar process leading up to the most current year's
7 harvest quota might well have resulted in a quota that
8 was better supported by subsistence users.

9
10 More public process is needed in
11 setting future quotas. One way to accomplish this is
12 for the Forest Service and ADF&G management team to
13 include at least one subsistence user active in wolf
14 harvest in the management process leading up to setting
15 the quota.

16
17 And finally, I'll just close by saying
18 that while the City supports a change to the Board --
19 as I mentioned earlier, Board of Game regulations to
20 return the wolf quota to 30 percent of the population
21 rather than just the 20 percent of where that's set now
22 by regulation, we're also open to other management
23 measures that would allow a high sustainable wolf take
24 each year.

25
26 Thank you for considering my comments,
27 Mr. Chairman.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much.

30
31 Is there any questions for Mr. Bolling.

32
33 (No comments)

34
35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any questions from
36 Council Members that are online.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Schroeder.

41
42 MR. SCHROEDER: Thanks very much for
43 your testimony. Could you let me know, was there any
44 sort of dissent in the meetings that you were in where
45 some people thought that -- are you representing the
46 community view or did you have like a lot of
47 controversy when this issue was discussed at meetings?

48
49 MR. BOLLING: So my comments are based
50

1 on the City's view, which may not be the same as
2 individual members of the community. So the meeting
3 that was in this room, for example, there was my
4 recollection is by and large agreement on the lower
5 quota -- setting quota of 25 animals for I think it was
6 2014. I wouldn't say it was unanimous or without
7 dissent, but my recollection is by and large people
8 understood the reason why.

9

10 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Ms. Needham.

11

12 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13

14 Do you know, is the City of Craig or
15 any other entity within that you've been working with
16 locally, are they going to be submitting a proposal to
17 the Board of Game to change the threshold from 20 to 30
18 percent?

19

20 MR. BOLLING: I don't have the
21 authority or the consent from the City Council yet to
22 do so, but I'm sure it will end up in a Council agenda
23 before the timeline begins to submit a proposal to the
24 Board of Game to change the regulatory number from 20
25 back to 30. But in the past the Council has --
26 although they haven't taken any formal action, my
27 impression is they would favor that.

28

29 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

30

31 Any other questions for Mr. Bolling.

32

33 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Ms. Phillips.

36

37 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman

38 Bangs.

39

40 Mr. Bolling, I'm wondering about
41 calculating potential -- there's a lot of echo. Sorry.
42 Dens. You said there were eight dens. And could it be
43 reasonably extrapolated how much of the rest of the
44 island is not covered by -- you know, how much acreage
45 is covered by the eight dens and how much is remaining
46 left to kind of get an estimate of population or is
47 that too simple.

48

49 MR. BOLLING: I don't know. You know,

50

1 we heard earlier that -- Ryan Scott I think told us
2 that the efforts to document wolf populations covered
3 some amount over 50 percent of the island, I think, if
4 I recall the number correct. I don't know that you can
5 say that the amount of dens is actually double the
6 eight that were identified. So I'm not certain. But
7 just with the eight dens alone that were documented,
8 that's -- my point earlier was it just shows a
9 substantial increase over the documentation of prior
10 years.

11

12 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other questions.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much
19 for your testimony and coming to the meeting here.
20 It's a pleasure for us to have such a good presentation
21 from public -- you know, a written testimony like that.
22 It was good.

23

24 Thank you very much.

25

26 Okay. Next, I'd like to call Mr.
27 Anthony Christianson.

28

29 MR. CHRISTIANSON: Good afternoon,
30 Regional Advisory Council. My name is Anthony
31 Christianson, for the record, and I'm here to represent
32 the Hydaburg Cooperative Association.

33

34 And today I just wanted to testify on
35 the wolf issue. I guess, you know, we all know it's a
36 big issue here on Prince of Wales Island. And the
37 lowering of the quota has drastically impacted our
38 ability to harvest deer. I was hoping for a larger
39 turnout from the public to testify to that, but being
40 in the position I have as a Federal Board Chair, people
41 are under the assumption that it was my idea to extend
42 the season as well. And actually that was a delegated
43 authority to the Forest Service and I found out at the
44 same day everybody else did.

45

46 So again I think the residents of the
47 island appreciated that extension for that opportunity.
48 I think that opportunity and extension was a direct
49 impact from the wolf and our inability to harvest what

50

1 we need in our communities as far as the deer. I can
2 speak for Hydaburg when I say that the deer harvest
3 this year did not even come close to meeting the needs
4 of our community. And a lot of it had to do with the
5 high number of deer that were on the landscape.

6
7 Myself being a personal user of the
8 deer resource and a local manager, like most people --
9 some of them I see here on the Board. Like Mike
10 himself, we put years into the areas that we hunt and
11 fish in. And the last 15 years or so we've made a
12 change in how we harvest deer in our community. Trying
13 to stay more within the regulations, more with working
14 with our managers to try to find solutions because the
15 resource is important. And we've had some success in
16 getting that community buy in on actually getting
17 permits, recording their harvest, and sharing that
18 information with us at the Tribal office so we can help
19 work with area managers in setting, you know,
20 regulations that reflect the actual take of animals.

21
22 This year was probably the hardest year
23 I've seen for deer in all of the time I've been
24 hunting. And we've seen a lot of wolf. And being part
25 of the wolf management team this year, we were again
26 recognized by the State and the Forest Service as a
27 cooperator in the hair study. And we submitted a lot
28 of information and we're very thankful to be a part of
29 that capacity building activity, as well as a team
30 member on coming up with answers or hopefully
31 information that will help our area biologists to make
32 informed decisions to set quotas that will be relevant
33 for what the population is and help support the needs
34 of the locals.

35
36 I felt bad to hear that, you know,
37 we're different than everybody else in the State and
38 that we're being managed harder than anybody else
39 because somebody out there in the world has a view of
40 our landscape and how that impacts us. And I think we
41 share our resource enough. Our culture and our
42 communities and our Island of Prince of Wales has been
43 very open to the outside world. We actually encourage
44 it. But not to the point that it becomes a detriment
45 to our communities and our way of life.

46
47 And changing that wolf quota changed
48 what's happening on the landscape. And so, you know,
49 I'm here to testify mainly that I'd like to see us get
50

1 back to how they did it before. Treat us like
2 everybody else until there is actually information that
3 says contrary. That we should be managed like the rest
4 of the State and those harvest limits should be liberal
5 and open and up for guys that are engaged at the local
6 level to help feel like they're involved in that
7 process and their words mean something.

8
9 And that's why I think we have a top --
10 a bottom up system called Regional Advisory Council
11 that goes to the Federal Board. And I know you guys
12 have done your diligence here as a Board to try to
13 address the issue. The State and Feds are trying to
14 work together to find a compromise, but it's not
15 happening fast enough. Again, they say we'll use last
16 year data to make up next year's population estimate,
17 but that doesn't feed people.

18
19 And when you have high unemployment and
20 low, low -- you know, things have changed. People in
21 the community aren't very rich. And that job of
22 providing food for people falls on limited people in
23 our communities. Not everybody is a hunter. And
24 there's probably 20 hunters in Hydaburg out of 400
25 people. Those 20 hunters got to feed 400 people. And
26 when we have very good hunters coming out of a season
27 with two deer, that doesn't feed five homes. That's
28 the math.

29
30 And so we're hoping -- the Hydaburg
31 Cooperative Association -- that we do increase that
32 subsistence harvest on wolf for the people on the
33 island so we can help limit the number of animals
34 running around preying on the deer population.
35 Because at the same time we reduced the harvest on the
36 wolf, we also reduced the bear harvest. And they have
37 a huge impact on the deer resource in our area. They
38 if not eat as much or more deer than the wolf do. And
39 we've reduced that sport hunt and limited off islands
40 to one bear in the last couple of years. And so we've
41 drastically increased two predators on the landscape at
42 the same time.

43
44 And I don't know how we manage or
45 account for that when we do these meetings that come up
46 with numbers. I'm not the scientist. I'm just a user.

47
48
49 And so I'd like to see us incorporate
50

1 some of these other factors into that because we've
2 also seen more bear this year in our area than we ever
3 have. And our area is largely private land that people
4 don't have access to. And so on our side we're trying
5 to work with our corporations to open that access up
6 specifically for the taking of bear because they're
7 having a large impact on the resource.

8
9 And couple that with we are the biggest
10 deer hunting haven in Southeast. We are overrun by
11 competition on this island both from ourselves and from
12 off island hunters. We are promoted in sport magazines
13 worldwide and people are walking and using this
14 landscape. And it is very limited. It's limited to
15 road. And if you don't hunt on the road you're taking
16 a high risk in a boat. And most of our community has
17 had to rely back to the marine access ways to start to
18 meet that demand due to the high competition on the
19 island.

20
21 Albeit there is a high number of deer
22 on Prince of Wales, the resource I think in my estimate
23 is fairly healthy across most of the landscape, but in
24 the areas that we focus our energy on it seems so have
25 the wolf. And so we've been in a direct conflict the
26 last couple of years watching these populations explode
27 on the landscape.

28
29 And in my perspective, we worked with a
30 lot of the people in my community to change how they
31 hunt. To change and follow -- like I said, follow
32 regulations and limit your take of does and start to
33 help the population rebound. Local management. That's
34 what we've been doing as residents to help the system
35 work. And when we get quotas that react to public
36 sentiment that creates a problem for us here, then it
37 becomes a problem for us to try to work with the
38 managers to fix the problem.

39
40 And so I'm hoping this body continues
41 the diligent work that it has. I hear today a lot of
42 good questions that are asked to the right people and I
43 think moving forward hopefully the team will come up
44 with a suitable solution for all the users.

45
46 But I think we should open it back up
47 to a liberal. I don't think there's a conservation
48 concern at all for wolf on Prince of Wales Island. It
49 was something drummed up by somebody for a timber sale
50

1 on the Thorne. To stop something, like the wooded owl
2 deal, you know. And, you know, yeah, we are the log
3 farm, but we've learned to become accustomed to that.
4 And we've managed to live off the landscape with that,
5 but we cannot compete with a species like the wolf when
6 it's so protected, you know. And then it leaves this
7 perception. Now we're being governed and regulated by
8 perception. And that's when the user has a problem is
9 when we speculate about things like high death rate and
10 mortality.

11
12 Well, guess what. Not opening the
13 season up does. It just -- it amplifies that
14 perception that that's what's going to happen. And you
15 create angry users that are going to react to it to
16 protect their way of life. And so I'd like to
17 hopefully see balance come to it sooner than later. I
18 think we -- like I said, I hope that we liberalize it.

19
20 In the meantime, there probably should
21 be a counter proposal that comes out of our area to
22 reduce the competition. And this year again I was
23 thankful to some degree they did an extension on the
24 deer, but at the same time I'm not too confident on how
25 successful that was in meeting the needs. In Hydaburg
26 I think we got one deer in 30 days in January. And so
27 in a season that we had very little harvest compared to
28 historical harvest, that extension again a lot of
29 people clapped their hands, but the success rate in
30 that was very low due to a high level of wolf in our
31 area. We usually get a lot of our deer off the beach
32 and those wolves are using it as a corridor to hunt as
33 well and the deer just weren't where we would expect
34 them to be this year.

35
36 And again, you know, we can probably go
37 do population estimates and the population will
38 probably be high, but it's not what we're to discuss.
39 It's about making sure people get food. And whatever
40 happened in the last couple of years has drastically
41 impacted Prince of Wales ability to harvest deer in
42 specific communities.

43
44 And I just came from lunch and the guys
45 -- I told them what was going on here and they were
46 like man, I never seen so many wolves in my whole life.
47 Where do we go talk to them -- the people. So I
48 forwarded them to here. Hopefully, in the morning
49 they'll come testify.

50

1 And so again I just hope that we work
2 together to find a solution to this and that the
3 managers who are in charge get more liberal with that.
4 Put us back on the playing field with everybody else.
5 I like Mr. Schroeder's words earlier. He took my
6 testimony right out of my mouth. I appreciated that.
7 And so I had less to say after that. And I -- you
8 know, with Mike and the other guys on the Board, I see
9 that we will probably come up with a solution to the
10 problem.

11
12 But again speaking from the Hydaburg
13 Cooperative Association, we had a hard time meeting our
14 needs this year. We look forward to hopefully the
15 State continuing their study with hair board stuff and
16 genetic sampling. We want to continue to be a partner
17 and find ways to work with our local agencies to find
18 those numbers that are adequate. And hopefully they
19 continue to focus on it and see it as a priority. And
20 I think that we heard here some assurances that 98
21 percent will be funded, Mr. Ryan. And so we appreciate
22 that. There is -- and I know he's under the gun, too.
23 You know, it's not an easy job to be the guy who is in
24 the position.

25
26 But again I hope we find a number that
27 is going to help the population on Prince of Wales
28 Island.

29
30 Thank you.

31
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
33 Christianson.

34
35 Cathy.

36
37 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

38
39 Tony, you were involved in the Unit 2
40 deer work that was done a number of years ago in that
41 planning effort. And I'm wondering, one of the things
42 as I sit at this table and listen to the testimony and
43 try to figure out like what are the next steps forward,
44 I hear that one thing could be developing a wolf
45 management plan, which might help. The other thing of
46 course is being somebody submitting a proposal to
47 increase the percentage use for the harvest level from
48 20 percent back to 30 percent. Do you feel like the
49 efforts of the Unit 2 deer work that was done here was
50

1 successful in terms of maybe it could be a model to be
2 applied back to developing a wolf management plan for
3 Unit 2?
4

5 MR. CHRISTIANSON: I think -- Ms.
6 Needham, I think that was very successful. It was
7 actually my first step into, you know, this arena and
8 working on subsistence issues for Prince of Wales. And
9 it was I believe a great model on getting all the
10 stakeholders to the table and getting input from people
11 with knowledge. And was very well vetted in Ketchikan
12 and Prince of Wales as far as making sure we reached
13 out to all of the interested parties. The solutions we
14 came up to are still in place today. Those same
15 regulations in areas and time lines, most of them are
16 still in place today and supported by all of those
17 people who were a part of it, as well as the
18 communities.
19

20 Again, we're not here to cut off
21 everybody or make it exclusive to us, but that process
22 helped us create areas on the island for Ketchikan to
23 enjoy when they needed to and timeframes that
24 recognized subsistence uses on the island, whether it
25 was a doe hunt or a preseason hunt for two weeks. So I
26 think the process was very valuable in coming up with
27 solutions to the Unit 2 deer issues that we were facing
28 at the time.
29

30 And I think it can be applied to the
31 wolf as well. And hopefully that's where we find
32 ourselves is using the vast expertise we have on Prince
33 of Wales Island to come up with sound management
34 practices for the wolf. But again I think liberalizing
35 it would be a very good idea.
36

37 Thank you.
38

39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Tony.
40

41 Mr. Schroeder.
42

43 MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Christianson, thank
44 you so much for your testimony. I just go back to
45 earlier in your testimony. You're speaking to how
46 you've had some success over the last few years of
47 bringing subsistence hunters into the fold such that
48 they see that the management structures are theirs and
49 that they're not necessarily something imposed from a
50

1 long distance. Enforcement of Fish and Game
2 regulations on the island -- it's a big island. There
3 are a lot of places to go. And what we really depend
4 on is that people buy into the regulations that we want
5 them to hunt and fish under.

6
7 And it almost seems that if we get out
8 of whack there, we have -- we kind of go back in that
9 direction. In the other direction of where people
10 don't really trust the management structures so well
11 and may not follow what's going on. You specifically
12 were talking about reporting requirements, but I wanted
13 to give you the opportunity to say a few more words on
14 that.

15
16 MR. CHRISTIANSON: Well, again it goes
17 back to people who take an interest in their community
18 about the resource. And, you know, Hydaburg had a -- I
19 would say a stigma attached to it for many years about
20 how we feel about resource management. We own it. And
21 that's what we sell to our community members and the
22 people coming up is that resource belongs to the
23 community. You know, there is no Federal or State
24 stamp on any animal that I see running around -- or a
25 fish. And if there was going to be a way that we
26 continue that way of life, it's going to be dependent
27 on the people who are terminal users, which is us at
28 the mouth of the creek or us at the end of the gun.

29
30 And so I think we have the largest
31 potential to make the biggest impact on the resource by
32 improving how we manage it locally. And so in our
33 community, you know, I grew up with a grandfather. He
34 told me the story. We went out hunting. I blew the
35 call. Thirteen deer ran up. I shot all thirteen and
36 not one was a buck. He had a family to feed. And so
37 going from what I was raised up in to a model where we
38 try to work within the regulation -- again it comes
39 down to ethics. There's two different ethics in this
40 world. There's ours that we have to feed our family
41 with and then there's the regulatory ethics that we
42 have to live by to maintain some formal program that
43 everybody -- the public and everybody can buy into that
44 works for the best interest of everybody.

45
46 And so we had to change our ethics in
47 our community to protect the resources for the next
48 generation and that takes a lot of working with key
49 hunters, working with knowledgeable people and getting
50

1 them to change their selves and their practices to
2 benefit the resource. This program was the eye opener
3 for that, you know, through our fishery work. And then
4 that Unit 2 work that we did early on.

5
6 Finding out we can change the system to
7 match or mirror what's happening on the landscape.
8 Let's manage the resource to what's actually happening,
9 not what the regulation says. And then change that
10 regulation to what's happening, not what some other
11 industry and interest has in mind for us, you know.
12 And if it we need 20 deer per family on this then we
13 need to make sure the other people know that. And we
14 should bump that up to 20 deer per household if that's
15 the need.

16
17 I'm not saying it is. I'm just saying
18 that we should be taking into account what the rural
19 residents of this State say and that's where we should
20 take our regulations to -- is to that level. And
21 everybody else needs to get in line behind that because
22 our focus for this Board is to feed the people. That's
23 what the Subsistence Board is about. But to find
24 balance with the other user groups.

25
26 And so to take ownership on that
27 concept in our communities, we have to make some
28 changes, you know. And we've been successful through
29 promoting this program and regulations, creating
30 partnerships with local entities, the area district
31 rangers and Fish and Game departments, working with
32 their offices and Staffs, trying to find sciences
33 behind. And we find ourselves both basically have the
34 same objective, you know, but one's science based and
35 one's traditional knowledge based. And they're almost
36 the same.

37
38 It's just trying to get the public to
39 see that in our communities when sometimes we find
40 ourselves in an area like this where that trust feels
41 broken because well, they unleashed a predator on the
42 landscape that we have to contend with. And what did
43 we do it for. I mean I spent 15 years helping build
44 resources and watersheds that are gone now. I might as
45 well have shot all 600 does in the last ten years I get
46 away because they're not there today.

47
48 So it almost felt like not. And this
49 is not just me, but multiple hunters on the landscape
50

1 feeling the same way. And that's why I hope we can
2 continue to show them that we're really trying to find
3 a solution to this problem so we can keep that buy in
4 in our communities.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

7

8 Anyone else have any questions.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Anyone out of the
13 Council Members have a question for Mr. Christianson.

14

15 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chair, this is Albert.

16

17 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Go ahead, Albert.

18

19 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
20 It's more an observation than a question, I guess.

21

22 Well, I believe the trust issue is --
23 is in a way our fault, at the local rural level we
24 trust that the resource is going to be taken care of
25 and that it's never in the best interest of the
26 subsistence user. I think when you look at the
27 executive order and all its intent, I think we need to
28 get back to that and figure out how to make that work
29 to protect the resource.

30

31 I don't believe, in this community,
32 that we'd totally destroy a resource that they relied
33 on for thousands of years and I'm sure that's the same
34 there. I was on Prince of Wales, you know, this past
35 fall and was expecting to see a bunch of deer and we
36 really didn't. And a friend of mine has been there
37 working for a construction company and he saw three
38 wolves in the last week where he's at.

39

40 I'd like to see this organization find
41 a way to get someone from Prince of Wales as a part of
42 their management plan they've been talking about. And
43 not just to listen to them, but to take their word as
44 fact. I'm a firm believer that there isn't anyone that
45 lives anywhere in Alaska that would totally destroy
46 their own resource that they depend on.

47

48 So I'd like this organization to
49 consider, you know, making sure someone from Klawock or

50

1 Hydaburg or Craig is a part of that management plan.

2

3

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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5

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Albert.

6

7

Any other questions or comments.

8

9

(No comments)

10

11

CHAIRMAN BANGS: I'd like to thank you

12

for your.....

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14

MR. HERNANDEZ: Don Hernandez here.

15

16

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Howard.

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18

MR. HERNANDEZ: No. This is Don

19

Hernandez.

20

21

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Oh, okay. Go ahead,

22

Don. I couldn't hear you very well. Sorry.

23

24

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Hopefully I'm coming across okay. Yeah. I was listening with a lot of interest to Anthony's testimony there and he sure made a lot of good points.

25

26

27

28

29

Something that kind of is always in the background and I'd kind of like to hear him make a little more comment on it is, just the level of development and roading and clear cutting and access issues that have all taken place in that lower end of Prince of Wales Island. It sure seems like that has a lot to do with this whole equation of people's ability to get deer. I mean so much has changed from the time that his grandfather was hunting to where we are today that -- and, you know, wolves are a factor, but it just seems like he was kind of alluding to all of the other factors as well.

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And, you know, we're kind of seeing the same thing here on the north end. My hunting experience goes back 30 years here and at that time I was hunting at a time when the wolf population was considered to be quite high. And my hunter success was always quite high. Now that the wolf population is acknowledged to be appreciably lower, I would have to testify that here on the north end after some

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1 significant, you know, trapping efforts that I am not
2 seeing near the wolf sign that I've seen, you know, 10,
3 15 years ago. And yet the deer populations are -- you
4 know, they're still kind of struggling.

5
6 I can't say that -- I was really
7 disappointed to hear that Tony had such a poor hunting
8 season down there. I would have expected that area to
9 be doing quite well. But we're just kind of holding
10 our own, but one of the biggest factors up here and
11 everybody will acknowledge it is just the intense
12 competition that we see with the road systems here.

13
14 I don't know, I would just ask Tony if
15 he's seen that as a significant factor as well.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 MR. CHRISTIANSON: Through the Chair.
20 Okay, Don. So I guess your question is it hunting
21 pressure as well as other factors. And we all know the
22 hunting pressure on the island has increased ten fold
23 in the last ten years. And then you couple that with
24 reduced access. Again, that was adding access through
25 logging, but reduced after they cut down a bunch of
26 roads which bottlenecked a lot of people to a lot less
27 roads on the island.

28

29 And then you couple that with some of
30 the ANCSA corporations not doing any kind of land
31 management practices. We're ending up with biological
32 deserts in our area, namely Deer Bay and the Chomley
33 area that are almost inaccessible to hunting either by
34 road or even through a clear cut. And so we can either
35 hunt the beach or we can muscle our way up to the top
36 of an alpine area, but anything in between is pretty
37 much off of the hunting area.

38

39 And so I'm speaking for the Hydaburg
40 area. And so we've gotten so much pressure in our area
41 from outside hunters that the land manager Hyda
42 Corporation cut off access to the land this year and
43 was strongly urging Sealaska to do the same due to the
44 inability of the shareholders and community members to
45 get enough deer, as well as wood resource. And this is
46 a twofold issue of what is becoming a harder and harder
47 commodity on the island to get easily. You know, we
48 live in the Tongass National Forest, but good luck
49 finding adequate wood for your community.

50

1 And so access has been an issue.
2 Increased pressure and competition between user groups.
3 You know, it's tough. You can go from Hydaburg to the
4 cutoff and there will be 30 cars parked on the side of
5 the road. That's one area .7 miles. And that's a
6 reality.

7
8 You can go down Soda Bay. Last year
9 you needed a stop sign to keep up with the traffic
10 driving down there during the rut because it's renowned
11 for the big bucks that we have. You know, we went down
12 one day to count the cars -- 32 cars down Soda Bay one
13 day hunting. Now, that really lowers the success rate
14 of your community to meet its need when there's 32
15 other trucks driving with four guns poking out all four
16 windows looking for the same deer you are.

17
18 And it just gets to be a little bit
19 disheartening when you have two days on the weekend to
20 do it because we are working citizens as well. Or
21 taking the time off to do it. And we are meeting a
22 large competitive hunter out there. And again like you
23 said, we're not above sharing the resource or finding
24 common ground to make sure everybody has access, but
25 that's the issues we're hearing from our community
26 members.

27
28 They're sharing with us as leaders.
29 I'm also a mayor of my community. I'm also the natural
30 resource planner for the Tribe. And I'm newly
31 appointed as the Federal Board chair so I'm supposed to
32 have a really big ear I guess. And it comes to you.
33 And people share a lot of information. We have
34 consortiums that four Tribes are a part of. They get
35 information and feedback to us. And Prince of Wales
36 itself is one large community that networks and shares
37 the information that is a concern to all of us.

38
39 And it has been a resounding impact to
40 this community on Prince of Wales, the competition that
41 has happened and the need that hasn't been met for
42 deer. And that is just what we're hearing off the
43 street. And feeding ourselves is our priority and we
44 want to continue to work with local managers to find
45 those solutions so we can enjoy the resource in the
46 future.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Tony.

49
50

1 Any follow up, Don.

2

3 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes. I hear Tony's
4 concerns there and I'm very glad to hear that the --
5 you know, the people down in Hydaburg are working, you
6 know, with the managers now. And his concept of local
7 management that understand what he's talking about and
8 that's just something that takes place in every village
9 I think is really important and I'm glad to hear that's
10 happening down there.

11

12 I just have one more kind of statement
13 to make. And it's an observation of mine and I'll kind
14 of pose it as a question to see if you might agree with
15 this. And that's, yeah, I do hear people saying
16 they're seeing a lot more wolves now, but I'm tending
17 to notice that due to all the fragmented habitat and
18 all these, you know, really hundreds of thousands of
19 acres that don't have many deer on them, roads are not
20 going to be there, hunters are not going to be there
21 for all the reasons he stated, we're kind of in the
22 situation where deer hunters and wolves are all being
23 kind of congregated in a closer proximity. And, you
24 know, there's a lot of limited places to hunt for both
25 us and the wolves. And sometimes I feel that people's
26 perceptions are being distorted by what they're seeing
27 just in relation to the fact that essentially that all
28 (indiscernible - distortion), you know, whether they're
29 subsistence hunters or non-subsistence hunters in the
30 areas are all kind of competing in a much smaller area.

31

32 And I'm wondering if you would agree
33 with that.

34

35 MR. CHRISTIANSON: Well, Don, I think
36 -- through the Chair. I think that is part of the
37 issue. But then as you look at the process we used
38 this year and last year to hair board studies, we put
39 it in the populated areas along the road systems and
40 used them on the custom hunting areas. And what we
41 noticed after the season -- we put our cameras out
42 during the season and after the season -- is we got
43 twice as many wolves on the camera after hunting shut
44 down. And so the wolves are pretty keened in on it,
45 too, when there's guns flying around on the road and
46 people have bullets in them and they're out competing
47 for the same exact resource.

48

49 They're smart.

50

1 (Laughter)

2
3 MR. CHRISTIANSON: I mean we emulate
4 ourselves after that social structure that wolves have.
5 And from our cultural standpoint. And so yeah, the
6 perception is that. But if they are staying away from
7 those areas during that pressured season and filling
8 back in after, I think there may be more wolves out
9 there than we know about.

10
11 But in Hydaburg we have never had this
12 many reports of wolf in the history of me being part of
13 the management team there. And, again, we still have
14 our cameras out today. And after the season closed,
15 those cameras are filling up with wolves. Because
16 areas of 30 cars a day driving down the road, shooting
17 at every animal moving. And so we were even wanting to
18 maybe potentially suggest moving the timeframe of the
19 study to after hunting season so that it isn't impacted
20 by so much human presence on the landscape interacting
21 with the animals during that season.

22
23 It just was one of our perceptions that
24 we were going to kick around.

25
26 But again, yes, there's a bottleneck.
27 Yes. All that activity happens in those critical
28 areas, but even with that this island has spoke loud
29 and clear this year that there is a substantial
30 increase in the wolf population on Prince of Wales
31 Island.

32
33 Being a co-investigator on the project
34 with the rangers and the State, they can attest to that
35 as well. And I think what did we hear today -- 1,500
36 hair samples were gathered this year. What that
37 equates to is yet to be known, but we got a lot of hair
38 samples. We got a lot of visual contact. We have a
39 lot of animals on video and we have a lot of reports
40 from subsistence users about the impact of wolf on
41 their hunting ability, as well as hey, I haven't seen a
42 wolf in 15 years and I've seen five this year.

43
44 So that kind of feedback is what I was
45 hoping more residents would show up here today and
46 share. Because again I'm one person. I've been doing
47 this a long time. I'm a usual face. And I was hoping
48 that we would have more Prince of Wales Island
49 residents here to say yeah, this is a huge concern for
50

1 us. Not just because I'm an Indian from Hydaburg and
2 we want more deer, but because I'm a partner with
3 agencies that is trying to come up with a management
4 system that works for the residents of Prince of Wales
5 Island to meet their need. And as a co-investigator,
6 there is a problem on the landscape, obviously, and we
7 need to address it.

8
9
10 Whatever the factors are, are the
11 factors, but it doesn't change the fact that we need to
12 address the issue and get back to the management
13 scenario we had a few years ago that liberalized the
14 take of wolf for the subsistence users on Prince of
15 Wales Island so we don't run into inadequate supply of
16 other resources that we depend upon for food.

17
18 Now that's my testimony.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Tony.

21
22 Any other questions or comments.

23
24 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, this is Don. I
25 just want to thank Tony, those are real good
26 observations and I'm really encouraged to hear it. I
27 look forward to hearing the results of the hair board
28 studies this year and I'm glad that the Hydaburg people
29 are participating in that stuff.

30
31 That's all I have.

32
33 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Don.

34
35 And thank you, Mr. Christianson.

36
37 And I think we all appreciate your
38 involvement in your community to work with your
39 community to understand that the -- for instance, the
40 doe take. And we learned from the Unit 2 deer study,
41 which I was a part of years ago, and we found that
42 education was probably the biggest factor in
43 understanding the dynamics. And it doesn't matter what
44 animal what we're talking about.

45
46 And I think your idea of maybe doing a
47 study with a much larger group of people to do the same
48 thing like we did with Unit 2 deers we could do with
49 wolves.

50

1 But thank you.

2
3 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman.

4
5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Ms. Phillips.

6
7 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Mr.
8 Christianson, I was wondering about, you know, Prince
9 of Wales Island is, you know, a great big island, sort
10 of like Chichagof Island is a great big island. And
11 the way things happen around Hoonah or around Tenakee
12 or even False Island, or in Peril Straits is different
13 than, you know, how things are here in Pelican. And
14 then the east side of the island is, you know, heavily
15 timber harvested and I'm over here on the wilderness
16 end of the island -- side of the island.

17
18 And, you know, Hoonah recently got a
19 shipyard. And so my husband spent some time there this
20 winter and stayed in one of the lodges there while his
21 boat was being worked on. And he said there was a lot,
22 a lot of out of state hunter traffic that stayed there
23 at the lodge. And then they'd be up early in the
24 morning and getting in their cars and then going out to
25 hunt. And then, he, you know, because he missed part
26 of the hunting season in our area, he got -- well, he'd
27 go up over there and try to get a deer and he felt like
28 his life was in danger because the amount of, you know,
29 hunter traffic was so close.

30
31 Anyway, so what I'm kind of getting
32 around is -- is it different on the lower end down
33 there by -- well, I guess you're not exactly on the
34 lower end, but you're near the lower end of, you know,
35 POW than it is on the west side and on the north side?
36 I mean, you know, there's, Don, he's on the north end
37 and he sees it from a different perspective than you
38 would there in Hydaburg.

39
40 And then is there a -- you know, is
41 there a corridor we could confine non-island hunters
42 to? I mean just, you know, put a strip in that's just
43 for non-island hunters? Or is it more realistic to
44 keep the hunt on the island to island hunters?

45
46 That was quite a few questions in one
47 question, but thank you.

48
49 MR. CHRISTIANSON: Through the Chair.

50

1 So it sounds like Patty's wondering if we could break
2 up Prince of Wales into subunits.

3
4 We know through the permitting that
5 there are core areas that take a brunt of the hunting
6 pressure on Prince of Wales Island. On the south end
7 again this year we restricted a lot of access to the
8 southern terminus roads, which was over to Chomley.
9 But there wasn't a real high success rate on that
10 hunting on that road anyway. And -- but we do take a
11 lot of pressure on the main road from Hollis to
12 Hydaburg. A lot of hunting pressure down in the Soda
13 Bay area and all the way through Trakadaro Bay (ph).
14 And so we -- I think we share the burden. But probably
15 more off-island hunters focus their pressure on the
16 north end. I would say probably north of Klawock to
17 those other communities.

18
19 As far as breaking up the island into
20 sections, I don't know if that would be relevant. It
21 might cause further confusion on the island on how to
22 deal with it. Again, there might be other ways. You
23 know, extending time for locals a little longer or
24 reducing some numbers for the sport take. But as far
25 as breaking it up, that might just complicate the
26 issue.

27
28 But the island itself, like you said,
29 Patty, and Don had said, is pretty large. And, you
30 know, something on the south end of Prince of Wales
31 could be drastically different than something on the
32 north end. You know, the north end can get a lot more
33 snow than we do. They can have that problem again as
34 far as pressure goes.

35
36 But there's an added pressure as well.
37 We've been getting a lot of people that come in on
38 boats from the Wrangell and Petersburg, Ketchikan and
39 Metlakatla area through the south end and have targeted
40 Dall extensively, which is our usual and custom ground.
41 So we're not just getting it on the road access. We're
42 now starting to get a lot of pressure from guys on
43 boats that are coming from -- they used to hunt the Red
44 Bay area and over by Coffman and all of that. Well,
45 that's been over pressured by the guys on the cars and
46 so now they just take a good week to come around and
47 hunt down in the Cordova Bay area.

48
49 And there was a lot of negative
50

1 feedback from our community members about that
2 perception, you know. And albeit those guys are all
3 legal hunters, it's still overwhelming when you a seine
4 boat in a bay with 40 deer hanging from the rafters,
5 you know, and you're going in there to try to get one.

6
7 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.

8
9 MR. CHRISTIANSON: And that's a regular
10 occurring activity here on Prince of Wales Island.

11
12 And so we've just learned to have to
13 live with it at this point and hopefully we can find a
14 way to solve the competition issue that is there, as
15 well as the other factors that impact the resource.

16
17 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

18
19 Did you have a follow up, Patty?

20
21 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah, Mr. Chair. I do.
22 So the customary and traditional use determination for
23 you on Prince of Wales is residents of Unit 1A, 2, and
24 3. So I don't -- that's quite a -- I don't know how
25 you would narrow it down unless you put it -- you know,
26 narrowed it down through regulation.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Thank you for
29 your comments, Patty, and your questions.

30
31 Is there any other questions for Mr.
32 Christianson.

33
34 (No comments)

35
36 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you again. I
37 really appreciate your time.

38
39 MR. CHRISTIANSON: Thank you guys for
40 the opportunity to testify today. Appreciate it.

41
42 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chair, I have one
43 quick question. This is Albert.

44
45 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay, Mr. Howard. A
46 quick question.

47
48 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

49
50

1 Mr. Christianson, have you guys
2 considered opening, you know, the area for subsistence
3 users maybe one or two weeks earlier than everyone
4 else? Is that an option that anyone has looked at?

5
6 MR. CHRISTIANSON: Through the Chair.
7 Mr. Howard, that's actually what happens right now, is
8 we do hunt I believe ten days prior to the opening of
9 the State lands. And again this year they extended the
10 season 30 days for subsistence users to meet their
11 needs. So we were provided extra opportunity. I think
12 40 days to be exact year as rural subsistence users.
13 So they are using those management tools right now.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Thank you,
16 Mr. Christianson.

17
18 Okay. We have a few more.

19
20 And I would like to try and get through
21 these with the point of not taking too much time. But
22 I want to make sure that everybody is able to get their
23 point across so that we can have time to listen to
24 everyone.

25
26 So the next person is Brian Castle,
27 from the Craig Advisory Committee.

28
29 MR. CASTLE: Good afternoon, Regional
30 Advisory Committee Members. My name is Brian Castle.
31 I'm speaking on behalf of the Craig Fish and Game
32 Advisory Board. I'm a lifelong Southeast Alaska
33 resident and have lived in Craig for 37 years.

34
35 The Advisory Committee is concerned
36 about how the wolves of Prince of Wales are being
37 managed as of lately and are seeking your help. The
38 third largest island in North America is a complex
39 situation with so much diversity of land ownership and
40 because of its rich natural resources, a very extensive
41 road system.

42
43 In the '90s, the wolf population was
44 estimated at about 320. And that number was determined
45 by trappers helping a biologist calling in those wolves
46 by different methods of estimation. And then the
47 logging of the '80s had caused the deer population to
48 spike and the wolf population, of course, followed that
49 trend. And trappers took advantage of the high
50

1 population, then they knocked the population down to a
2 number that became a concern.

3
4 Island residents are not sure if that
5 was a concern for the wolf population or a way to stop
6 old growth logging. And our wolves were believed by
7 some to be a separate wolf subspecies, so consequently
8 were attempted to be put on the endangered species
9 list. And if that were done, logging would have to be
10 stopped to protect their habitat. Now DNA has proved
11 that Unit 2 wolves are no different than any others in
12 Southeast and they travel from island to island very
13 easily depending on food supply and breeding
14 opportunities.

15
16 And after countless meetings it was
17 decided that instead of 30 percent of the wolf
18 population that was being allowed to be harvested, it
19 would be cut down to 20 because of the concerns of
20 population and the threat of an ESA, which is
21 Endangered Species Act. Now, this is the third time
22 that the ESA has been attempted. The first time was
23 when the population was at an all time high. And it
24 was only a concern for Unit 2.

25
26 This last one that was proposed was for
27 all of Southeast. And a Fish and Game study in the
28 central part of the island determined that there were
29 89 wolves in Unit 2, which included the surrounding
30 islands of Prince of Wales. And this was agreed by all
31 to be a very conservative number. And the study is
32 done with the use of hair boards and a few radio
33 collars and trail cameras, scat count, or reported
34 sightings.

35
36 Now, this study is done in the most
37 used section of the island and probably the least
38 populated by wolves because of the road system access
39 to deer and human disturbance. And during the study
40 the last few years we haven't had the snow to be able
41 to see tracks in the snow very effectively. In fact,
42 that lack of snow has allowed trappers to get to the
43 north end of the island where they normally wouldn't be
44 able to drive during the winter. And this winter
45 seemed to be getting back to a normal snow level and
46 has allowed tracks and patterns to be observed more.

47
48 The island schools and other agencies
49 like the Nature Conservancy and the Forest Service have
50

1 contributed a lot in putting out the hair boards and
2 cameras to help the Fish and Game in determining a
3 better estimate of the wolf numbers in Unit 2. And
4 because of the threat of the ESA, the trackers, the
5 U.S. Wildlife Service, and the Fish and Game came up
6 with 20 percent as a harvestable compromise. And that
7 was supposed to be for one year until a better
8 population number was determined.

9
10 And Fish and Game took that 20 percent
11 to the Game Board and put it in a more permanent form.
12 And nothing can be done until the Board of course
13 cycles around again. Now, 20 percent of 89 is 18. And
14 because Fish and Game thought some wolves were being
15 harvested illegally they cut that number in half. So
16 allowed 9 wolves to be harvested year before last.

17
18 When half that number was reported,
19 Fish and Game had people pull their traps to make sure
20 that the number wasn't gone over. That year only five
21 were harvested. This year the number was 22. And Fish
22 and Game wants to say that 50 percent are taken
23 illegally. Well, some probably are taken illegally,
24 you know, by an opportunistic moment, but you can't say
25 50 percent and use that in your game management plan.

26
27 As the harvestable numbers get bigger,
28 that would especially not ring true.

29
30 Now, 28 were taken this year. But all
31 but five were taken off other islands other than Prince
32 of Wales. Island like Lulu, Dall, San Fernando, Sumez,
33 Heckita, Price of Wales wolves were hardly bothered
34 these last couple of years.

35
36 What the Craig Advisory Committee would
37 like from the RAC committee is a number of wolves that
38 could be used as a baseline. We believe 160 is fair
39 because that's half of the number of 320 determined in
40 the '90s. If it's determined that the population is
41 over 160 in Unit 2, then those wolves will be allowed
42 to be harvested. 30 percent of 160 would be 48 wolves
43 that would be allowed to be taken each year. And if
44 it's determined we are below 160, then we can go back
45 to the 20 percent to build the population back up.

46
47 There have been a huge amount of
48 sightings this year. More than I can ever remember
49 since I've been on the island. And there were 1,000
50

1 more deer taken this year on Prince of Wales than the
2 previous year of a little over 3,000. Now, according
3 to research that is due mainly to off-island people
4 coming to Prince of Wales to hunt. And I can't say the
5 extension of the deer season was very popular to most
6 because of the deer harvest at an all time high and the
7 wolf population at an all time low.

8
9 Now, the rut seems to be going longer
10 and longer the last couple of years. This year it went
11 well into December and that's not normal. That seems
12 to indicate that those does were still cycling because
13 they hadn't been bred, which would mean the buck ratio
14 may be getting out of balance in certain areas.

15
16 The Craig Advisory Committee would like
17 more local input. The different agencies want our
18 local help and knowledge when it's to their advantage
19 and need, but are cut off and ignored otherwise. There
20 is a secret Federal committee that is setting the wolf
21 numbers. And it's no -- it's no secret the Federal --
22 excuse me. There's -- the -- our Federal biologist
23 wasn't even asked their input at all. And so different
24 agencies don't trust each other on this issue because
25 of the different agendas.

26
27 The local Advisory Council is concerned
28 that when the funding for the wolf study is done, which
29 is very soon, who will do it and how will it be funded.
30 And even if it is somehow continued with the results
31 from it and local knowledge and sightings, will they be
32 used.

33
34 As subsistence users, the people of the
35 island feel like we are in the middle of a political
36 mess. Logging is a vital part of the island
37 community's economic base and we don't want the wolf
38 issue used as a scapegoat to influence that. We need a
39 local person from the island put on that committee so
40 that hopefully the island can be better represented and
41 the community be more accurately informed.

42
43 The Craig Advisory Committee thanks you
44 for your time and for your commitment and concern for
45 Alaskan subsistence users.

46
47 Thank you.

48
49 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Thank you,

50

1 Mr. Castle.

2

3

I think Ms. Needham has a question.

4

5

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6

When you were talking about the committee, are you referring to the InterAgency Technical Team that was put together to work on the wolf habitat management program for Unit 2? Or.....

7

8

9

10

11

MR. CASTLE: Yes. Well, the committee that -- the Federal committee that was going to be used to set the wolf numbers. And one of the concerns is -- or a big concern is that there wasn't a lot of local input at all. And in fact when the Advisory Committee asked different people that attended the last meeting that should be in the know, there wasn't one person in the room that knew any of those people on that committee, which gave an indication that -- at least to the Advisory Committee that they hadn't been asked for their input at all.

12

13

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22

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Cathy.

23

24

Mr. Douville and then Mr. Reifenstuhl.

25

26

27

MR. DOUVILLE: Just a point of clarification. I think it was seven wolves that were taken during the trapping season the year before, not five. And I think Mr. Owen addressed that. Said they weren't planning any -- didn't have any hand in any of the wolf planning. They were planning habitat, if I'm correct. But any planning for habitat has an effect on wolves.

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

MR. REIFENSTUHL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

36

37

I want to understand this secret committee a little better. I believe you said it was Federal.

38

39

40

MR. CASTLE: Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

41

42

MR. REIFENSTUHL: And if so, can you tell us a little more about this? And it doesn't seem to jive with the State setting the 20 percent harvest.

43

44

45

So I'm not understanding it. Please

46

help me.

47

48

MR. CASTLE: Well, from our

49

50

1 understanding, this committee is the one that sets the
2 wolf number. And the wolf number that will be
3 harvested. And our concern is because of the different
4 issues involved in setting that number, including
5 logging and other -- well, I guess other influences,
6 we're concerned that there's no local control on that
7 -- no local input on that committee at all.

8
9 And what we would like to see is
10 somebody from the island be represented on that
11 committee.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Does that sort of
14 answer your question?

15
16 MR. REIFENSTUHL: No. Not really. But
17 I guess I would agree that having some local input
18 would be good. But I still -- I guess I don't
19 understand if it's truly secret or this is a rumor that
20 there's a secret cabal that is setting the actual
21 number. I mean I thought the number was determined by
22 an estimated population or what the population was
23 thought to be. And you take 20 percent of that and you
24 take your unknown mortality subtracted. That's how I
25 understand it's done.

26
27 So if it's done another way -- this is
28 suggesting it's done a different way. I think we need
29 to know what that is.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Steve.

32
33 Cathy.

34
35 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
36 do actually think there might be some confusion.
37 Because I agree with Mr. Reifenstuhl that the quota
38 that is set is set by regulation. And so that would be
39 the State and Federal manager that do that based on the
40 previous season's population estimate. That's how the
41 quota is set. And then in the past couple of years the
42 managers have used a guideline harvest level, which was
43 a reduction in that quota. And I think that's
44 different than what I was referring to.

45
46 And that was my question to you, which
47 I think you might have misunderstood because you
48 weren't here for a discussion earlier today. I had
49 asked about an InterAgency Technical Committee that is
50

1 developing a wolf habitat management plan. That I was
2 wondering whether or not there were subsistence
3 representatives on. And so we might be meshing those
4 two entities.

5
6 And I don't know if that clarifies
7 anything, but I agree with Mr. Reifenstuhl in terms of
8 how the quota is set and I don't feel that there's a
9 secret committee necessarily doing that portion of it.

10
11 MR. CASTLE: That probably wasn't maybe
12 a correct word for maybe this, but what we meant by
13 that was that -- and I'm sure there's lots of people on
14 that committee from different agencies. It's just that
15 no one that we could find out from from anybody that
16 should have been in the know knew anything about it.
17 Or hadn't been asked for their input. Didn't know who
18 was on it. And, you know, so obviously somebody knows,
19 but we just felt like if the people that should know
20 don't know, then there should be some more community
21 input.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Castle.
24 And I think that's where the confusion lies because
25 we're not combining the different groups as we should.
26 I think you're right. They have this habitat committee
27 made up of Fish and Wildlife -- or Fish and Game and
28 some Federal biologists, but they didn't include the
29 stakeholders like it says that is to be included and I
30 think that's where the confusion lies. Is there's
31 these different things going on and they're not being
32 brought together.

33
34 And the committee that was formed for
35 habitat is totally important and entwined in the
36 management program for setting the wolf population.

37
38 And my opinion is, it has to work
39 together.

40
41 And I think Mr. Owen is online. Maybe
42 he could shed some light into the people that were on
43 this secret committee, so to speak.

44
45 MR. OWEN: Yes, Mr. Chair. I can do
46 that. I can give you the exact names of everyone and
47 assure you that no one ever went to a meeting in a
48 black helicopter.

49
50

1 The members of the Wolf Technical
2 Committee were Bonnie Benesten, she is the Tongass
3 National Forest Wildlife Program leader.
4
5 Steve Brockmann, with the United States
6 Fish and Wildlife Service here in Juneau.
7
8 Anthony Krupe, a specialist from the
9 Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
10
11 Bree Daar, who is the Wildlife and
12 Fisheries Staff officer for the Tongass National
13 Forest.
14
15 Luke Decker, also an employee of the
16 Tongass National Forest.
17
18 Rod Flynn, a scientist with the Alaska
19 Department of Fish and Game.
20
21 Don Martin, who is a member of my staff
22 here in the Regional Office, U.S. Forest Service
23 employee.
24
25 Ryan Scott, who you all know right
26 there in the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
27
28 And Tom Schumacher, also Alaska
29 Department of Fish and Game.
30
31 Those are the members of the Wolf
32 Technical Committee.
33
34 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that
35 clarification, Mr. Owen. Was there any local
36 stakeholders involved? I didn't catch any names of
37 local Tribal members or local trappers or hunters for
38 wolves.
39
40 MR. OWEN: Again, this document is
41 being -- was -- is being prepared for the Forest
42 Service to provide a set of tools for project planners
43 so that they can better accommodate the needs of wolves
44 and deer as the Tongass National Forest goes forward
45 and implements its (distortion) so any of the
46 recommendations and tools that this committee put
47 together will be -- any time that they are used, there
48 will be a public process for people to comment on.
49
50

1 There is, again, nothing in this
2 document that constrains the Forest Service. Nothing
3 in this document constrains the Alaska Department of
4 Fish and Game. It contains merely a set of tools and
5 recommendations to better manage for deer habitat to
6 support wolf populations on the island.

7
8 And -- and -- and I'll say, you know, I
9 -- I know and I understand that any time something's
10 not been exposed that there will be a lot of questions.
11 As recently (distortion) I was told that this document
12 would be completely finally cleared with all the edits
13 and punctuation checks and all that at the end of
14 April. So everybody will see the 39 or 40 page
15 document as soon as it's done going through the -- the
16 diligence and making sure that everything is spelled
17 right and all the -- all the science is cited correctly
18 and all that sort of stuff.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much
21 for that clarification, Mr. Owen.

22
23 I think it would have helped a lot to
24 understand that before the meeting began of discussion
25 of wolf population and problems that we're having. But
26 thank you very much.

27
28 MR. OWEN: And -- and -- and Mr. Chair,
29 thank you for that. I know all of the members of the
30 technical committee have been working very hard to get
31 this document done and finally cleared. They are all
32 proud of the work they've done. And so while I underst
33 (distortion) completely understand the questions, I
34 would simply beg for a little indulgence, you know,
35 from the public. You know, we will share this document
36 with everyone. And once everyone has a chance to look
37 at it, I think both the State and the Forest Service
38 would be more than happy to be engaged with people
39 about what's in it and how it's applied.

40
41 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much.

42
43 Okay. So we have Mr. Castle still up.
44 Does anybody have any questions for him pertaining to
45 his testimony.

46
47 (No comments)

48
49 Online.

50

1 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair. Yes. This
2 is Patty.

3
4 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Go ahead, Patty.

5
6 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
7 Mr. Castle, are your subsistence needs being met? Are
8 you getting the amount of deer that you need for your
9 family?

10
11 MR. CASTLE: Well, yes, I am. But, you
12 know, you have to work a lot harder. And I -- we know
13 this year -- well, I commercial fish in the summer and
14 so, you know, I go into the fall. So I don't hunt
15 usually in the -- you know, in the beginning of the
16 season, it's usually toward the end. And, you know,
17 when that happens, you know, I guess you're -- you
18 know, a lot of people have already hunted already.

19
20 And so this year seemed to be tougher.
21 A lot tougher. And so -- and I think that was the
22 trend, you know, everywhere in our area, you know, as
23 you've already heard.

24
25 So, you know, one thing because I trap
26 south of Craig and down on Dall Island and I did see,
27 you know, a bunch of bucks on the beach that were still
28 chasing does during trapping season. And that's
29 something that you just don't see very often. You
30 know, they haven't been in years or all the times that
31 I've been down there, which is quite a while.

32
33 So I think that, you know, things
34 changed this last couple of years. And I thought it
35 was due to, you know, our warmer winters is what I
36 thought originally but, you know, that wasn't the case
37 this year. So, you know, something is changing and,
38 you know, hopefully it will be figured out.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Bryan.

41
42 Any other questions.

43
44 MR. WRIGHT: Yeah. Mr. Chairman.

45
46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes.

47
48 MR. WRIGHT: This is Frank. What I was
49 thinking about was, you know, I heard this person say
50

1 he got his -- was satisfied with what he got for deer
2 hunting. But we're looking at communities with a lot
3 of people that can't go in the woods. That can't --
4 you know, like I can't climb a mountain anymore and I'm
5 sure there's a lot of elderlies or people that just
6 can't do it anymore that aren't getting their needs.

7
8 So a lot of deer that are -- you know,
9 the deer that are out there are getting taken by
10 wolves, so when we look at this we have to consider the
11 elders and the people that just can't do it anymore.
12 So I think it's a big concern of Prince of Wales. You
13 know, some of -- like a lot of young bucks that are --
14 young guys that are going out there are doing the best
15 they can so they can supply their community.

16
17 So I think this is a big concern of the
18 communities.

19
20 And another thing is that, you know, we
21 always talk about Federal governments and all these
22 government agencies that always say we need your input,
23 we need you to talk to us so that we can get all of the
24 information and traditional knowledge.

25
26 That's just a statement I'm -- just
27 sitting here thinking about all this stuff, you know.

28
29 So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for those
32 thoughts, Frank. That's a very valid point. The
33 demographics of our average age is definitely coming
34 upon the time when there's a lot of us that can't climb
35 a mountain. So thank you.

36
37 Is there any other questions for Mr.
38 Castle.

39
40 (No comments)

41
42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. Thank
43 you very much for your testimony.

44
45 MR. CASTLE: One last thing that I
46 guess, you know, thinking about the question that was
47 asked of me. You know, anymore -- like I say, I don't
48 consider myself young anymore and there's only my wife
49 and I, and usually, you know, we go up north moose

50

1 hunting.

2

3 So, you know, I don't -- I hunt -- I
4 usually hunt deer because I like to. But because it's
5 -- and I usually go by boat. And the reason I go by
6 boat is because I can't -- because I have the ability
7 to go someplace where there isn't so many non-island
8 residents.

9

10 Because like it's been stated before,
11 if you go on the road system, you've got to compete
12 with so many other off-island people. And so it's
13 easier for me to go someplace where there's not so many
14 people. Whereas if you came to Ketchikan you're kind
15 of restricted.

16

17 And so anyway, it's something that is
18 becoming more and more prevalent is people having to go
19 -- there's a lot more people out in the boat now
20 because it's forcing them to go, you know, other places
21 that off-island people can't get to.

22

23 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Thank you
24 very much for your testimony.

25

26 MR. CASTLE: Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I think we
29 should take a ten minute break. We still have two more
30 people to testify and we've got a lot of agenda left.
31 So we'll just take a quick break here and then we'll
32 come back. And try to do it in less than ten minutes
33 and we'll get going again.

34

35 (Off record)

36

37 (On record)

38

39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. We want to
40 finish up our public testimony. We have two more
41 people to give testimony on wolf management.

42

43 Okay. The next person to give some
44 public testimony is Mr. Mike Douville, from Craig
45 Tribal Association.

46

47 Mike.

48

49 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

50

1 For the record, I'm Mike Douville. I represent the
2 Craig Tribe. I've lived in Craig for the last 68 years
3 and I have a few things to say about the wolves and
4 actually some other things.

5
6 As far as Mr. Owen said he had Tribal
7 consultation, but the only consultation I remember in
8 recent times was one that we initiated here earlier
9 this year in a government-to-government consultation
10 that the Tribe initiated. We filed a request for
11 special action because of the 50 percent reduction in
12 the wolf quota we disagreed with. But when it became
13 apparent that we were going to catch the quota -- not
14 the 50 percent reduced quota, but the real quota, we
15 withdrew it.

16
17 In any case, I would like to appeal to
18 the Regional Forest here to make these consultations
19 happen when the tribes are going to be affected by any
20 decisions that the Forest Service is involved in,
21 whether they be at a plus or minus. Whether it be
22 timber or wolves or deer or anything else. I think
23 that we are a Tribal government. A recognized one.
24 And we should be included in any and all of those
25 conversations.

26
27 This is a real prime issue. And the
28 last thing we were talking about was deer. And I saw a
29 graph this fall that TNC presented that showed that we
30 were about 4,000 for a deer harvest. And the doe
31 harvest was like 200 and it's been maintaining that for
32 some time. That's up from a little over 3,000 plus, so
33 I can't -- I don't know what the real number was, but
34 we are increasing in harvest. Not this year, but for
35 the previous year that covered.

36
37 It's really worrisome to me because I
38 think we are at max plus harvest for bucks. And some
39 of it is because off road hunters are becoming more
40 numerous. But not only that, they are becoming more
41 educated and better at what they're doing. So they're
42 learning the ground and getting better, but I don't
43 think we can sustain that level. It's going to cause
44 some problems like it did in the past and where you had
45 to have a deer planning committee to try to resolve
46 some of the issues. But they kind of resolved
47 themselves in the fact that, you know, all the wolf
48 take boosted -- you know, created a better balance and
49 it kind of dissipated.

50

1 But we're going back in the same
2 direction again because like Brian said, we're seeing
3 the rut extending way beyond what is normal. I was out
4 trapping this year and I got to witness it firsthand.
5 You know, you just couldn't set snares for wolves
6 because there was just too much deer activity. Usually
7 that tapers right off and you're okay. You're not
8 going to catch a deer -- or less likely.

9
10 So there are some issues looming here
11 that I think need to be seriously looked at. And I
12 think Klawock has got a proposal to reduce the number
13 for off-island, which may be addressed, but trust me.
14 I think it's here.

15
16 Mr. Scott addressed that there -- we'll
17 go to the wolves now. Their DNA and the stuff they're
18 using is lagging behind. It's lagging behind a long
19 time, but meanwhile the wolf population is increasing.
20 We never believed that it was 89. But we went along
21 with that because we had a couple of meetings here and
22 we were scared of the ESA. We didn't like it. So we
23 were willing to step way back and let this thing flush
24 itself out. We never believed that the wolves were
25 endangered. But we were willing to take real
26 conservative steps just to avoid it because it would
27 cause so many problems.

28
29 In that meeting the quota was 30
30 percent and we conservatively said okay. Well, we'll
31 do anything. Just make this go away. So we discussed
32 it and decided 20 percent. But we were thinking for
33 that season. Because the State was saying well, we're
34 going to redouble our efforts for DNA and we're going
35 to have better numbers by next year. But instead that
36 number went to the Board of Game and now it's changed
37 in regulation.

38
39 So what we're doing is raising wolves
40 now because it seems like 20 percent is not going to
41 enough. And it's certainly not going to be enough if
42 you deduct 50 percent off the top for illegal harvest,
43 which is -- where's the proof. There certainly is a
44 little bit of that, but it certainly isn't proven out
45 to be 50 percent. You know, I think it's -- where that
46 came from, I don't know. We were blaming some secret
47 society, but I think the Department then did it
48 administratively because I don't think the Board of
49 Game said okay, yeah, do 50 percent reduction for

50

1 illegal harvest. We really had bad heartburn about
2 that.

3
4 And as a result, this year we're kind
5 of gaming the system. If we had a good relationship, I
6 could call up our Federal biologist and say oh, I got a
7 couple today, you know. But instead we weren't turning
8 in any wolves until the 14 days were up, so they had no
9 idea of what we were doing. And we purposely did that
10 and unless some of this gets corrected, it's going to
11 get worse down the road.

12
13 So we managed to game it not doing
14 anything illegal, but we did manage to get the quota,
15 which was what we wanted to do. If we had done it like
16 the previous year, we would not have. Because there
17 was a carry over from that year, you know. So one of
18 the biggest heartburns is that 50 percent. The other
19 is the lack of timely information to set the following
20 year's quota. Lagging a whole year behind, but
21 meanwhile, you know, just say for instance on an island
22 you have two wolves, a pair. By the following summer
23 you have seven. I mean it increases quite rapidly.

24
25 I look at it as a lost subsistence
26 opportunity. You know, we're just not up to speed and
27 also we're going to lose any balance that we may have,
28 you know. And we need that balance because people
29 depend on deer. We don't eat wolves and what we're
30 doing is raising wolves right now.

31
32 So we need to correct the 20 percent
33 part. My suggestion is 320 to 340 wolves was a
34 guesstimate in the '90s. They had less tools and
35 hardware to predict a wolf population, but that was
36 what the biologists at the time decided there was.
37 Well, I testified at the Board of Game on behalf of the
38 RAC when they wanted to reduce the number to 50 and we
39 decided 60. I went and testified for the RAC. And I
40 testified at the time that I didn't know what the
41 number was, but it was half of what we had before in
42 the '90s and we were happy with that.

43
44 And if you wanted to use those previous
45 numbers, that would be about 160. But I firmly believe
46 that that's target population and we should be aiming
47 for -- as was suggested, I would say anything from that
48 number higher we harvest at 30 percent and anything
49 that's lower than that we can harvest at 20 percent to
50

1 try to maintain some kind of a biological balance. So
2 we have deer and, you know, there's still plenty of
3 wolves.

4
5 So we don't want to go ESA. And we're
6 not ESA. It was found that there's no basis for it.
7 So we shouldn't be regulating it like there is.

8
9 The 50 percent part of it is really a
10 problem because using like Mr. Bolling said the
11 anecdotal evidence like oh, I heard so and so might
12 have got a couple, you know. I mean some of that --
13 you know, you just can't do that. You know, you have
14 to have some proof to reduce that.

15
16 You know, initially that comes from
17 Pearson's study in the '90s. You know, the island had
18 double the population. This was 20 years ago. Logging
19 was peaking. Everybody was hunting out with a rifle,
20 you know, and of course there was more probably illegal
21 harvest then, but today I can't agree with the numbers
22 that came from 20 years ago. It's a different place
23 today. So we need to fix that somehow.

24
25 If you're going to use anecdotal on one
26 end, well, why not use it on the other. We have some
27 good sources of information here, you know. I've never
28 seen a biologist where I trap on these islands. I
29 don't know if anyone else has. Dall Island, down at
30 the south end, there's a lot of -- where the wolf
31 population is higher than the core Prince of Wales.
32 I've never seen boots on the ground there from the
33 Department. Or from the Feds either one. But we go
34 there. We know what's going on. I mean they don't
35 seem to trust our information. But that's where we
36 hunt and we work on wolves there, too, so we have a
37 place to go.

38
39 So they need to consult with someone
40 with local knowledge. But who knows better than people
41 that live in a place to ask information from. They
42 know what's going on.

43
44 And I'm afraid that if the wolf
45 population is what's perceived by the local trappers
46 and the hunters to be artificially that you will have a
47 certain amount of civil disobedience and they will take
48 matters into their own hands. And, you know, I don't
49 care what kind of regulations you can make. We'll make

50

1 our own, you know, that sort of thing. So we want to
2 avoid that if we can.

3
4 So I would suggest that the Department
5 incorporate some of this local knowledge because we
6 don't -- you can't use the core middle of the island
7 and extrapolate that. Because we -- some of these
8 islands have much more higher populations and they're
9 more important to us because we can get away from the
10 road system and go hunting. Because these guys aren't
11 exaggerating. There's more traffic on the road during
12 the rut. And we do have an early season, but in
13 reality most of the deer are taken during the rut. So
14 that's what -- and the traffic is amazing. I was out
15 cutting wood and I couldn't believe the amount of cars
16 going by, you know. And actually in the moonscape that
17 just was logged, you know.

18
19 So that's my suggestion as to how to
20 approach a happy medium because the Department does not
21 have a population goal of any kind that I know of.
22 Just 20 percent harvest. And so we need to have some
23 kind of a number and that's one that I would suggest.

24
25 Beyond that I guess I'll try to answer
26 any questions you may have.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
29 Douville. Mike, in your opinion, what would be the
30 best thing that the Council could do? I mean we can --
31 there's going to be a call for wildlife proposals here
32 coming up soon, which we could write a proposal. But
33 what I'm envisioning is what you think would be a good
34 way to form a working group with stakeholders, the
35 State, Federal biologists. What's your thoughts on how
36 we could go about fixing this in a timely manner and
37 get all the people together because it seems like
38 there's people that are going in different directions.

39
40 MR. DOUVILLE: I don't know. This is
41 kind of a hard one because this is Federal land. My
42 first thought is to make a proposal to the Feds. Take
43 over the management of wolves on Federal land. Because
44 we seem to be able to move faster than the State, which
45 is three years apart. We could do it, you know, a
46 little bit faster. Because this is turning into a
47 problem. The deer populations are going down. Not
48 only that. We're harvesting too many, I think.

49
50

1 How to go about the -- the Board and
2 Game might listen to you. But what if they didn't.
3 It's something that we should be looking at perhaps
4 taking action on a Federal level. I really don't have
5 a simple answer.

6
7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. I don't
8 think it's an easy answer, but we've been talking about
9 this for quite a few years and we haven't seemed to
10 come to a consensus on how to deal with the problem.
11 And I think that all stakeholders are going to have to
12 get involved in some sort of a subcommittee or some
13 kind of a group of people in order to get this problem
14 sorted out.

15
16 And I just -- I'm not from this island
17 so I don't -- and I don't trap so I don't have anything
18 to offer other than that it's apparent that it's a
19 problem and I think the stakeholders need to get
20 together. And I'm just not sure how to do that.

21
22 I'm open for suggestions from the
23 Council if there's something we can do. Or is it going
24 to be something that comes from the Tribe. Or
25 something from the local trapping community and the
26 Department of Fish and Game and the local biologists
27 from the Federal side. I'm just not sure.

28
29 MR. DOUVILLE: During the ESA
30 discussions -- we had two of them here. And the
31 Department and the Feds were more than happy to sit
32 down and talk to us and, you know, we kind of need your
33 help here. So we said okay, 20 percent of this season.
34 You know, we'll take that cut and everything. And then
35 after that passed, the information just dried up. I
36 mean okay, here's these regulations. You know, you
37 guys get nine wolves this year. We took 50 percent off
38 the top for illegal harvest. And this last year --
39 well, you get 22, but really we're only giving you 11.

40
41
42 All that information dried up and there
43 was no more communication. And, you know, we were
44 pretty forthcoming. I helped the Department some and I
45 showed them where to put a couple of cameras and this
46 that are really good spots and they've gathered
47 information from that, you know. But I find myself
48 less willing to share any more information because
49 we're not getting anything back. And whatever they

50

1 know, I already know. Okay. You know, I've been doing
2 this a long time. They're not going to -- whatever
3 they tell me isn't going to make me a better trapper.
4 I already know how to do all that.

5
6 And I mean it's -- I mean if that's one
7 of their worries, forget about it, you know. I already
8 know what to do. So I don't know why it dried up and
9 they quit talking to us. So we're not going to share
10 any more back until we get -- you know, it's got to go
11 both ways.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any question.....

14
15 MR. DOUVILLE: But we did help them
16 with ESA stuff. I mean the people here were more than
17 willing to do that. Even though we're trappers and we
18 like to keep a biological balance and stuff, but we
19 were forthcoming and helpful. We were, you know.
20 Yeah. And I felt disappointed that things are not the
21 same way today.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mike.

24
25 Steve.

26
27 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
28 I guess for everything I've heard today, what I'd like
29 to see is a wolf management plan for Area 2. And that
30 we perhaps as a RAC write the State and request that we
31 have involvement. Have a representative in that. And
32 I think we heard the State say that they are willing to
33 do that. And I think that the Office of Subsistence
34 Management biologist would be willing to do that. And
35 I think that there would then therefore be local
36 participation if we entered into that sort of
37 arrangement.

38
39 I think going down the path of
40 suggesting Federal takeover, it sounds quick and easy,
41 but I don't think it is. I'm mean I think that's --
42 we're talking about extraterritorial jurisdiction to do
43 something like that and I don't know that that's a
44 quick thing to do if we're going to cut the State out
45 of it.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Steve.

48
49 Cathy.

50

1 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
2 agree with Mr. Reifenstuhel in terms of I think a good
3 -- one movement forward would be to develop a wolf
4 management plan. And I had asked Tony Christianson
5 about whether or not the effort that was put forth in
6 order to work on the Unit 2 deer issue on Prince of
7 Wales Island in the past was a good model to
8 potentially do that with.

9
10 And so I would like to ask Mr. Douville
11 if -- I mean we heard from Tony and he felt that it
12 was. But I want to know from Mr. Douville if he feels
13 that it would be the right venue in order to bring
14 stakeholders together much in the way that that was
15 completed and if you think there would be participation
16 on Prince of Wales Island from the stakeholders that
17 have been involved in this wolf issue the last few
18 years. For instance, trappers and Tribal governments.

19
20 MR. DOUVILLE: So what are you asking
21 me?

22
23 MS. NEEDHAM: I'm asking if the Unit 2
24 deer effort that happened on Prince of Wales Island and
25 there were actually members of the Regional Advisory
26 Council on that. There were members from all of the
27 local governments, local stakeholder groups involved in
28 that planning effort. I want to know whether or not
29 you feel that that would be an appropriate to move
30 forward to have a wolf management plan for Unit 2
31 wolves developed.

32
33 MR. DOUVILLE: It would be a plus. At
34 the same time, I think it's about time to start
35 thinking about a deer planning committee also. Because
36 to be honest with you, you know, I grew up here. You
37 know, I know this country really well and I'm not too
38 bad of a hunter, and I struggled this last year. I
39 came home empty more times than I could ever remember
40 in my life, you know. And I know this ground pretty
41 good. So something's going on here.

42
43 I guess maybe next year we'll see if
44 it's really that way or just was unlucky. But, you
45 know, I'm willing to give it a little bit of time. But
46 also my backyard here got a little bit of treatment, so
47 maybe that will help.

48
49 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Are there any
50

1 other questions for Mike.

2

3

MS. PHILLIPS: Yes, Mr. Chair.

4

5

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Ms. Phillips.

6

7

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

8

9

Mr. Douville, the C&T use
10 determinations include residents of Unit 1A, 2, and 3.
11 Is it realistic to -- if you have to narrow down to
12 include 1A and 3, is that -- would it -- can you have a
13 sustainable deer population including with 1A and 3 if
14 you have to narrow down the harvest?

15

16

17

MR. DOUVILLE: I think you're talking
about the area around Ketchikan. Those residents. Is
18 that what you're asking?

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

MS. PHILLIPS: Well, I guess I should
just say it like off-island. Off Prince of Wales
Island. I mean can those people from 1A and 3, which
is, you know, Petersburg, Wrangell area, I mean I --
you know, I just don't -- how do you know that when you
have a broad traditional use determination?

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

Now, I don't -- I mean it's fine that
you want -- you know, that it's being proposed to have,
you know, these working groups. But those take time.
And it sounds to me like we're having some conservation
concerns. Not enough wolf harvest and too much deer
harvest. And so, you know, we need to take immediate
quick term or near term actions and then still proceed
with committee, you know, whatever stakeholder groups.

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

But I'm seeing that yeah, Prince of
Wales Island people need to be harvesting off their
island because they have food security needs. And --
but I just -- I don't understand how we're going to be
able to do that if you have other residents of, you
know, Unit 1A and 3 continuing, you know, their
harvest, too. Unless most of the competition is coming
from non-Federally qualified.

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MR. DOUVILLE: Well, I guess you would
first restrict the non-rural users. I mean it's
written into Title VIII that way. But I mean that
would be my first avenue that I would choose.

1 MS. PHILLIPS: Okay. That answered my
2 question. Thank you.

3
4 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Is there any
5 other questions for Mr. Douville.

6
7 Mr. Schroeder.

8
9 MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
10 This is sort of backing up a bit. Not a global issue,
11 but we heard earlier today that the wolves taken this
12 last year were mainly taken on the islands. Can you
13 say anything about where harvest has taken place over
14 the last few years, Mr. Douville?

15
16 And, you know, against that we're doing
17 our estimate for the population of wolves by studies on
18 Prince of Wales proper.

19
20 So you kind of get my direction there.

21
22 MR. DOUVILLE: I'm not sure. Well,
23 most of the harvest came from down the outside islands
24 out here and Dall Island. We kind of put our effort
25 into where we hunt and we can have a little bit of
26 peace from -- I don't compete with off-island hunters.
27 You know, I've always gone in the boat. And it's been
28 okay, but one of the drawbacks is a lot of my pals that
29 live here figured it all out. And you have a high
30 harvest level out there also. It's not wolf. It's
31 people. That brings the population down also. And
32 then when you add a few more wolves to it like happened
33 in the last year or so, then things get much more
34 difficult.

35
36 I don't know if Brian Castle is here.

37
38 Anyway, but he said, you know, local
39 knowledge is worth something, you know. He said -- I
40 just was on San Fernando and he said I saw the tracks
41 of seven wolves, oh, yeah? Yeah. Well, between what I
42 caught on the cameras, he was spot on. You know, he
43 knew what was there. So, you know, some of these guys
44 do know what they're talking about and I think that
45 needs to be a consideration.

46
47 So we're going to focus our efforts on
48 where we are. We could care less about the rest of the
49 island. But it's going to impact a lot of people if
50

1 that happens, especially with a lower quota than what
2 we think should be there. I think we're at 160 plus
3 now anyway.

4
5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

6
7 Follow up.

8
9 MR. SCHROEDER: Well, just follow up.
10 Maybe I wasn't clear. I thought I heard that most of
11 the wolves taken this last year were taken from
12 islands. And the population estimate for wolves is
13 based on sampling in the heavily deer hunted areas, the
14 road connected area. And I wondered if in your opinion
15 over the last few years most of the wolves have been
16 taken from, not Prince of Wales proper, but from the
17 other islands.

18
19 MR. DOUVILLE: Yes and no. I think
20 there was a better mix in the past years. I think in
21 the last year or two more focus has been put on the
22 islands.

23
24 Did that help any?

25
26 MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

29
30 Any other questions.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any questions from
35 online.

36
37 (No comments)

38
39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: No questions.

40
41 Oh. Mike, which islands are the ones
42 with the deer on them?

43
44 (Laughter)

45
46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mike.

47
48 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chair, this is Albert.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Albert.

2
3 MR. HOWARD: Just an observation, Mr.
4 Chair. I've heard it said that this management tool
5 they're putting together with all these biologists and
6 scientists aren't going to be used (distortion) they're
7 looking at -- my experience is that it's going to be
8 used to regulate so I'd like to see people from the
9 area at the table when they decide to put this plan to
10 use.

11
12 I've been told that here in this
13 community as well, and when the community decided to
14 lower the total allowable catch for a couple of
15 seasons. That total allowable catch on sockeye stuck
16 and we're stuck with it. And we've even gone through
17 the ETJ process to try to address that it issue and
18 it's still an ongoing issue. So I hope that the local
19 tribes pay attention to what was said, that this tool
20 and data isn't going to be used to regulate or set bag
21 limits. I have a feeling it's going to be because it
22 has been done here in this area.

23
24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25
26 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Howard.

27
28 Okay. The last person to testify for
29 wolf and deer is Mr. Michael Kampnich. Kampnich. I'm
30 sorry.

31
32 MR. KAMPNICH: Thank you. My name is
33 Michael. Thank you for being here, for holding your
34 meetings here in Prince of Wales, Craig. My name is
35 Michael Kampnich. I'm a 30 plus year resident of
36 Prince of Wales.

37
38 Just background on a little bit of my,
39 you know, what I might say here. I'm representing two
40 entities. I work for the Nature Conservancy in the off
41 season. I fish in the summer and work for the Nature
42 Conservancy in the off season. I have participated for
43 the State on their hair board study the last three
44 years. I do one section of the rounds in Central
45 Western Prince of Wales and I also work with them on
46 their camera documentation of occupancy and wolf
47 activity throughout the island. I manage some of the
48 cameras and simply turn the information over to the
49 State as I recover the data off the cameras.

50

1 In regards to the Nature Conservancy's
2 comments regarding wolf management here, basically the
3 Nature Conservancy believes heavily in research and
4 sound documentation for appropriate sustainable
5 management. And they think that that must include
6 local user groups, local entities, and local knowledge.

7
8 And then from my own observations and
9 suggestions, basically everything's been fairly well
10 covered. A couple of points I'd like to make.

11
12 I think the initial -- not the initial,
13 but the last ESA listing has been pointed out here
14 already and I just want to concur it was based on
15 flawed data. The area that was documented, the Central
16 Prince of Wales area, is the most heavily utilized and
17 accessed area and it's almost certain that the wolf
18 population in that area was down because of harvest
19 activity. Consequently, that was considered to be
20 island-wide or unit-wide, which it wasn't, and so there
21 was -- you know, we went through a whole process that
22 really was uncalled for and unnecessary.

23
24 The unreported harvest versus reported
25 harvest, it's been mentioned here a few times. I
26 concur that I think that that's probably not the best
27 way to go about that process of determining that. I
28 would also concur it occurs. I think we need to look
29 for opportunities to find a better methodology to
30 address that concern or that issue.

31
32 One suggestion I would have as somebody
33 that has a small amount of halibut quota, commercial
34 halibut quota, we have a ten percent fudge factor. I'm
35 sure most of you guys are aware of this. Where we can
36 go over or under ten percent a year and then it's
37 either deducted or taken off of the following year's
38 quota. I would suggest at least considering doing
39 something similar to that for unreported harvest.

40
41 We had one or two unreported harvests
42 here this year that were documented, fairly well
43 confirmed, investigated by Fish and Wildlife officers,
44 and nobody questions that. That would be the
45 appropriate way in my estimation to do this because
46 then it gives you a basis that's been investigated. I
47 don't think it would be necessary to go all the way to
48 a conviction of somebody for an unreported or illegal
49 harvest to take that quota, but I think it needs to be

50

1 well -- reasonably well established that it occurred.
2 It just can't be speculation or innuendo or word of
3 mouth.

4
5 What that does is that -- then there's
6 a basis for why you're making that determination from
7 withdrawing animals, you know, for harvest. And that
8 generates confidence in that process and confidence is
9 really important in management. And so that's a
10 suggestion to -- you know, on a way to do that that
11 would I think make people comfortable and give a basis,
12 you know, a sound basis for why you're making these
13 determinations in management and in reduction of
14 harvest in one area.

15
16 One area that has been again mentioned
17 just a little bit, I think it's really, really
18 important to dive into this genetic analysis and
19 genetic flow charts as the State has started to do when
20 they're sealing and they're recovering samples. Going
21 forward as that genetic database enlarges, gets bigger,
22 they're also doing it as far as I understand on the
23 islands, you know, Ravella, Mitkof, Zorembo, other
24 areas, the mainland, the trappers that are working in
25 other areas. As that database grows you're going to
26 start to see flow or lack of flow and that's going to
27 tell you a lot about what's happening. It'll tell you
28 even within Unit 2, you know, how much genetic flow you
29 have going back and forth on the island as samples are
30 recovered and put in a database.

31
32 We're seeing DNA become prominent in
33 every aspect of human health research, identifying
34 trends and stuff. There's no reason that we can't do
35 the same thing with wolves here. And I think that
36 would be a great -- it's a developing great tool for
37 management.

38
39 I think that camera documentation, I
40 mentioned that. That's also a growing area of research
41 where people are getting better and better at it.
42 We're learning how to deploy cameras more appropriately
43 in the right places where you can see the, you know,
44 the activity in areas that tells you the -- you know,
45 whether there's consistent occupancy, sporadic
46 occupancy. It gives you an indication of population.
47 I wouldn't go so far as to say you can count the
48 population, but it gives you an indication of whether
49 you have a, you know, a healthy occupancy of an area or
50

1 whether maybe it's just sporadic.

2

3

4 And the other thing the cameras can do,
5 they can help determine reproduction. Because when you
6 do see -- beginning in about July and August, depending
7 on camera deployment, you start to see pups showing up
8 on camera. And that's another indication of a -- you
9 know, a stable and a viable population. And so
10 cameras, I believe, have a really crucial part going
11 forward in helping determine occupancy, reproduction,
12 and sustainable populations.

13

14 I would like to acknowledge and I
15 appreciate that the State biologists, Regional
16 biologists, several of them and even the State wildlife
17 biologists have, you know, made the effort to be here
18 and address concerns and talk with people. I think
19 that, you know, that's the kind of interaction that
20 builds confidence and is necessary to, you know, come
21 out with the best management plan possible that is
22 supported by the local user groups. And I applaud them
23 for being here.

24

25 And lastly, I would like to -- I just
26 want to acknowledge, too, the deer issue is -- there's
27 something going on here. Populations seem to be going
28 -- the buck population specifically seems to be down
29 somewhat. I think it's probably a combination of
30 issues. We've heard about, you know, habitat issues,
31 road issues, off-island hunters, predation. It's a
32 combination of things and one can influence the other.
33 Mike referenced it.

34

35 The pressure on the island here is a
36 little heavier and so now you have more people from the
37 local communities using their boats and going to the
38 outside islands here. Consequently being smaller land
39 bases, the populations aren't as big and then that
40 pressure affects those areas. And so it's -- there's a
41 number of issues going on with deer as well and I would
42 encourage, you know, our State and Federal managers and
43 the Subsistence Board here to pay attention to that
44 concern.

45

46

Thank you.

47

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mike.

48

49

Is there any questions from the

50

1 Council.
2
3 (No comments)
4
5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any questions from
6 Council Members online.
7
8 (No comments)
9
10 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. Thank
11 you very much.
12
13 Okay. Is there any more discussion
14 from the Council on the wolf issue. I think we'll --
15 probably it'll come back up again here under call for
16 proposals. But if there's any more discussion.
17
18 Cathy.
19
20 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
21
22 You know, we specifically asked to have
23 this meeting on Prince of Wales Island so that we could
24 get answers to questions that we had raised at previous
25 meetings -- more than one. And I want to make sure
26 before we leave this issue that we've tried to -- and
27 the call for proposals is one mechanism, but that we've
28 -- understand that we can -- what recommendations we
29 want to make that can actually result in some action
30 between now and our next meeting. I don't want to
31 leave Prince of Wales and this discussion and then come
32 back and have this discussion again at our next
33 meeting.
34
35 And so I know call for proposals might
36 be one place that we could talk about that, but are
37 there any other things that we can do as a body at this
38 point in time to make sure that something happens
39 between now and the next time so that we're not just
40 continually just taking testimony and getting status
41 reports.
42
43 And I think one of those things is that
44 wolf management plan that's been talked about. What
45 can we do. Who do we need to ask to make that happen
46 or to put that recommendation forward that we think it
47 needs to happen.
48
49 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Well, thank you for
50

1 that, Cathy. That's a very good point and I think we
2 do need to develop some sort of a plan from the Council
3 perspective as to what we can do to speed things up and
4 to make sure that it happens.

5
6 So I might suggest that maybe this
7 evening Council Members that are interested in getting
8 together with Mr. Douville, who's foremost I think
9 expert on the wolf issue on Prince of Wales on the
10 Council, that we might come up with some sort of an
11 idea, a plan, and we could address that tomorrow.

12
13 Would that make sense to the Council.

14
15 Cathy.

16
17 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18
19 I also wonder if we would have the
20 opportunity -- you know, we heard -- we got a report
21 from the Federal Staff and a report from the State
22 Staff and then we heard a lot of testimony. And we've
23 had a lot to think about and I want to make sure we
24 also might have the opportunity to ask questions of our
25 Federal and State Staff again at some point if we need
26 to in order to decide what the best course of action
27 for the next, like our recommendation might be.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. I do believe Mr.
30 Scott will be here and Mr. Porter. Will you guys be
31 here tomorrow. And Mr. Reeves will be here. So I
32 think we will have Staff from both sides that could
33 answer questions.

34
35 I just want to give time for this to --
36 you know, to think about it. I mean I'm not ready to
37 make any wild ideas right now, but I think if we let it
38 settle in, what we heard today, we could come up with
39 maybe a couple of ideas that we could move forward with
40 and not leave this meeting without addressing it again.

41
42 So if everybody's okay with that, I
43 think we'll.....

44
45 MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes.

48
49 MR. WRIGHT: Yeah. This is Frank.

50

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yeah, Frank.
2
3 MR. WRIGHT: I think it's a good idea
4 what we're doing. I think that if at all possible that
5 local knowledge to be involved with putting this thing
6 together. I know Mr. Douville is pretty local there,
7 so the local community, and a lot of input should be
8 put into this proposal.
9
10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
11
12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for those
13 thoughts, Frank.
14
15 Anyone else on the wolf subject at this
16 point.
17
18 (No comments)
19
20 CHAIRMAN BANGS: And then we have one
21 time sensitive public testimony, but it's on a
22 different subject. But I want to make sure that we can
23 rest here with the wolf discussion until tomorrow. And
24 then we can address it again here when we get to call
25 for wildlife proposals.
26
27 So if everybody's good with that, I'll
28 ask Mr. Louis Wagner, Jr. to come up. And his
29 testimony is on the three year review.
30
31 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chair. Real quick
32 while he's coming up to the microphone.
33
34 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Come back on that.
35
36 MR. HOWARD: This is Albert. Just a
37 suggestion on the wolf real quick.
38
39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Sure. Go ahead.
40
41 MR. HOWARD: Do you want to include the
42 other organizations that testified as well as Mr.
43 Douville in the discussion they're going to have this
44 evening, if they choose to.
45
46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Well, thank you
47 for that. And we'll be discussing it more here when we
48 get into the call for proposals.
49
50

1 Thank you, Mr. Howard.

2
3 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4
5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Go ahead.

6
7 MR. WAGNER: Thank you, Chair. I'm
8 going blank here. The RAC Board here. Appreciate the
9 chance to speak once more and give testimony. My name
10 is Louis Wagner. I'm a member of Metlakatla. A life
11 long resident. And been serving on our Council since
12 2000. And if I may, before I start I'd like to thank
13 everyone else that has been giving testimony. There's
14 a lot of good advice coming out here and especially on
15 the local knowledge.

16
17 And I would like to repeat our former
18 -- Bill Thomas, who was Chair of the RAC Board I
19 believe when it started. He was a really good man and
20 a very strong leader. And he pushed that what Tony was
21 talking about and Mike was talking about. And when the
22 Board started the rooms were full of people. They had
23 hope. They came and they gave testimony, but they left
24 disappointed.

25
26 And then after about three years people
27 -- if you look around it's empty. Mostly government
28 people. The last full meeting I seen on the RAC Board
29 was in Saxman. There was a full turnout at the Saxman
30 Hall there. And it's just sad to see. People don't
31 want to spend the time or money to come with their
32 hopes up and leave broken hearted. So I just
33 appreciate the few that gave testimony today.

34
35 Thank you for that.

36
37 And on that three year review on the
38 fishing and that concerns the eulachons, which hasn't
39 even been considered. And is the RAC Board here going
40 to handle that right away or what's going to happen
41 with that.

42
43 So I'm -- you know, no review. The
44 fish are there. And I don't know if you can give me an
45 answer.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BANGS: I have to refer to
48 Cathy, but I do understand the situation a little bit
49 because I live near Eulachon Stream, but we're able to
50

1 fish. But I know Cathy was the one that was here
2 yesterday running a meeting and I'm not sure what the
3 consensus was as to how they were going to move
4 forward. But I have a couple of ideas myself.

5
6 But I'll let Cathy.....

7
8 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
9 have a question that might be actually a question for
10 Staff. But you said a three year review for eulachon
11 and my understanding is that the eulachon have been
12 closed by emergency order each year and not in
13 regulation. The closure is not in regulation; is that
14 true.

15
16 And so then it would therefore not --
17 because the three -- sorry. Because the eulachon run
18 is not -- the harvest is not closed by regulation, then
19 there would not be a three year review; is that
20 correct.

21
22 So then when you were here earlier
23 today and we were talking about a three year review for
24 the wildlife closure on moose, that was because that
25 harvest was closed by regulation. So the difference is
26 that the eulachon harvest is closed each year by
27 emergency order and it's not set in regulation yet. So
28 there wouldn't be a three year review for us to make a
29 recommendation on.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Ms. Hardin.

32
33 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34
35 Yes. That is correct. The closures
36 that are taking place currently on that fishery are
37 temporary closures that the in season manager is
38 initiating through delegated authority. The Board's
39 closure policy that requires a review of every three
40 years for closures to non-subsistence users is exactly
41 what Ms. Needham described. It refers to closures that
42 are in Federal regulations and therefore don't have an
43 expiration date unless there's a -- we receive another
44 proposal to rescind the closure.

45
46 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Ms. Hardin.

47
48 And then to follow up with the question
49 of where we go from here -- where this Council goes

50

1 from here, my understanding from yesterday's discussion
2 was that the recommendation would be that the issue be
3 considered in our -- reported in our Annual Report.
4 And that recommendation came from Mr. Schroeder. And
5 then to the best of my recollection we had no other
6 things on the table for consideration with respect to
7 eulachon at this time.

8
9 But anyone that was here with that
10 discussion can correct me if I'm wrong.

11
12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Schroeder.

13
14 MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Wagner, I think you
15 told me you're leaving tomorrow and you're probably not
16 here. So I'd like to give you your last opportunity to
17 have a shot across the bow on eulachon if there's
18 something that you didn't mention yesterday.

19
20 MR. WAGNER: Well, I was at the meeting
21 in Anchorage when the Federal Board met and the
22 recommendation came to close the eulachons, but it was
23 temporary until the fish came back. And the fish have
24 come back, so there's no material coming up here that
25 was not discussed at the meeting in Anchorage. It's
26 far different than temporary. This is permanent. And
27 it was not done permanent.

28
29 And what's the emergency this year when
30 the river -- last seven years they've been coming back.
31 And last year the river was full. It was just like it
32 always had been when we'd go up there. And I tell you
33 there would be nobody around that river but us getting
34 eulachon. All of a sudden -- they sure took a lot of
35 interest into the eulachon, especially after the
36 hearing that Kashakes (ph) was killed off down there.
37 Everything focused on the (distortion) and then the
38 people miss out.

39
40 And it's something that I've loved to
41 do. I worked hard at it with my family, especially my
42 son. And all we do is we go catch them and bring them
43 to town. It's not like they're going off to another
44 country. This belongs to the greater Ketchikan area,
45 as I like to put it, because that's what comes up in
46 all the testimony, especially on the hunting.

47
48 But yeah, I don't believe in that
49 testimony she just gave because it was a temporary
50

1 closing until the fish came back. That was said. And
2 if it's looked up, that's what should be found in the
3 minutes. And I don't know what else to say.

4
5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Wagner.
6 I listened in as best I could yesterday and the thought
7 crossed my mind that I understand the restraints of the
8 Department to do surveys with staying in Federal
9 equipment to go up there and do surveys. So the idea
10 came that I would recommend -- just a thought -- that
11 the Department allow a permit, a conditional use permit
12 to go up there. Somebody that wants to go fish
13 eulachon, go up there with a small boat and do a test
14 fishery and be able to keep the fish. And then the
15 Department would know.

16
17 You could video it or whatever so that
18 they could get an idea of the quantity of fish up
19 there. And then it wouldn't jeopardize because they --
20 the constraints on them is they can't do a proper
21 survey. So it was just an idea that I thought would
22 open up the idea of being able to let everyone know.
23 Because it is, you know, traditional ecological
24 knowledge that people don't know in the Department.

25
26 So why not let people go up there and
27 do a test fishery and show everybody what's up there.
28 That's just a thought. And I would think that would be
29 possible to do through a -- but I'm not sure what --
30 you know, what governs that idea of making a special
31 permit. But I'd have to ask the Department.

32
33 I think that would be one way.

34
35 I don't know what your opinion on that
36 would be.

37
38 MR. WAGNER: I don't know. I'd have to
39 give it some thought. And I've been through all this,
40 you know. I went through this RAC Board and I went
41 through the Federal Subsistence Board. And why I like
42 going back to our late Bill Thomas, that it would take
43 an act of Congress to change this. I've got pictures.
44 Got the (distortion) up there that shows my family has
45 been there and doing this. And nobody else came to do
46 it because they're making big money off herring and
47 whatnot. And we just basically did it to make sure
48 we'd all get eulachons. And they just keep closing it
49 on us.

50

1 And the emergency closure and they
2 don't even go up the river and have a look, you know.
3 You have to go up and run the river and see what's
4 there because sometimes they're hard to find. And
5 you're not going to see them from an airplane, you're
6 just not.

7
8 The pictures we took it was so full
9 they were as black as these seats and it looks like a
10 shadow in there. And I had to look at them for a while
11 and I know we took good pictures. And where there was
12 a few spawning in the area they're silvery, so then.
13 But when they're all jammed up, it was just a black
14 spot.

15
16 So like I say, I don't know what else
17 to say or where to turn to. Like I said, I was in D.C.
18 first of the month and I mentioned the concerns there
19 because I'm running out of time. I've already dealt
20 with cancer and I'm 69 now and have a real hard time of
21 hearing, so I have to really listen hard, I need some
22 new hearing aids.

23
24 But yeah, this is not right.

25
26 And that's why this room is empty.
27 That's why nobody's coming anymore. They've given up.

28
29 Thank you.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Wagner.

32
33 Anybody else have any other questions
34 for Mr. Wagner.

35
36 (No comments)

37
38 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Anybody online.

39
40 MS. PHILLIPS: Hi. This is Patty
41 Phillips.

42
43 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Ms. Phillips.

44
45 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
46 Bangs.

47
48 I have more of a comment than a
49 question. And that's a -- you know, we're about, you
50

1 know, being a venue for people with personal knowledge
2 of local conditions to, you know, come before us and
3 tell us what they're seeing and we have, you know,
4 testimony before us today that says for the last seven
5 years he's seen the return of eulachon in the Unuk
6 River, and we've been hearing as a RAC that there is no
7 eulachon coming back. And we've been pushing forward
8 these fisheries monitoring requests, you know, to try
9 to figure out where the eulachon are. You know, that
10 basically that eulachon is extinct. And I've been
11 hearing a deep sense of responsibility that we haven't
12 done our job, you know, to protect that resource.

13
14 And then we have -- you know, we have a
15 -- you know, someone with local knowledge telling us
16 that he's gone up there with his son and his grandson
17 and he's seen that there's lots there. And he's going
18 to lose the opportunity to share his knowledge, his
19 traditional knowledge of harvesting and of putting up
20 the resource and sharing it within his traditional
21 community.

22
23 And so, you know, I feel like I'm like
24 right in the middle. You know, we want to protect the
25 resource and yet -- but we also want to protect a way
26 of life that's been going on since millennium. So, you
27 know, where does that leave us. We're kind of stuck
28 between the, you know, the biologists and then the, you
29 know, way of life that's gone on forever.

30
31 So I mean I just -- I don't know what
32 to do here. I mean if it's only supposed to be a year
33 by year thing and what process is there that allows
34 someone like Mr. Wagner to put his two cents in. And
35 hey, you know, biologists figure out a way where maybe
36 I could -- like you were suggesting, Chairman Bangs,
37 you know, maybe he could go up and do his way of life,
38 do a test fishery documenting everything.

39
40 But, you know, we're going to lose his
41 knowledge that he has to share.

42
43 That's my comment.

44
45 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much,
48 Patty.

49
50

1 Would you have a comment, Mr. Wagner.

2

3

4 MR. WAGNER: None other than I
5 appreciate what she had to say. And we are. We're
6 losing knowledge here as we're getting older, and look
7 around and we're all old. And you read the obituary
8 which I'm starting to do and the people younger than me
9 and a little older, they're all dying. They're dying
10 at a rapid rate.

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 So when this generation goes, things
are going to be a lot different for our younger
generation. We failed them by not teaching them like
we were taught by our grandmothers and grandfathers.

 Thanks.

 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Thank you,
Mr. Wagner. So I have one last question. Just so you
are able to get a test fishery permit and take a boat
and they decide on how much you could take or an
estimate, would you take up a bunch of other boats with
you and show them how it's done? And participate in
the fishery and be able to harvest them and document
what you see and share that with the Department? Would
that be something that you would be interested in
doing?

 MR. WAGNER: Well, it's not a place you
want to take -- just take people out. Most people
haven't even been up there. The river is tricky. It's
dangerous. But I usually like to take my family
because we go up. We don't have insurance, so we cover
for each other.

 But the gentleman from KIC wanted to go
and he said he was willing to go up with us if -- you
know. If that would be more truthful, he's welcome to
come along.

 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay.

 MR. WAGNER: And we wouldn't take any
if it looked like a weak run, you know. That's how
we've been.

 Thanks.

 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Thank you, Mr.

1 Wagner. I just was trying to think of some way we
2 could find out more information than what the
3 Department is capable of doing. So thank you very much
4 for your testimony.

5
6 (Pause)

7
8 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Reifenstuhl.

9
10 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
11 I would just like to let you know I sent Scott Walker,
12 the area management biologist, an email just a second
13 and asked him his thoughts on this.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

16
17 Okay. I think what we'll do is we've
18 got to get through a couple more things here today.
19 And it's already getting close to 4:00 o'clock, but I'd
20 like to go into the call for Federal wildlife
21 proposals.

22
23 And I think Mr. Suminski is going to
24 give us an overview.

25
26 MR. SUMINSKI: Good afternoon, Council.
27 Terry Suminski with the Forest Service.

28
29 A call for proposals to change Federal
30 subsistence regulations usually is issued in January of
31 odd number years for wildlife. During this call you
32 may propose changes to Federal subsistence seasons,
33 dates, harvest limits, methods and means of harvest,
34 and customary and traditional use determinations.

35
36 As Ms. Perry mentioned earlier, the
37 issuance of this call is currently on hold until the
38 announcement can be published in the Federal Register.
39 However, OSM will accept proposals during this meeting
40 and hold them until that announcement is published in
41 the Federal Register.

42
43 Are there any questions on that. I
44 think DeAnna explained it already.

45
46 (No comments)

47
48 MR. SUMINSKI: Okay. So at this point
49 I think we could go into -- if there's any proposals
50

1 the Council wishes to submit, we could maybe work on
2 them at this point. I think Ms. Perry is ready with
3 the proposal form up on the board that we could work
4 through if you so choose.

5
6 So thank you.

7
8 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Terry. I
9 think we do have a couple of ideas.

10
11 Ms. Needham, did you want to start?

12
13 MS. NEEDHAM: Not yet.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Oh, okay. Well, I
16 would -- I guess we just spoke to the wolf issue and I
17 was wondering if anyone had an idea of a proposal.

18
19 Mr. Douville.

20
21 MR. DOUVILLE: Well, in a meeting in
22 Wrangell we had this discussion when the Department
23 wanted to lower the quota from 100 to 50. And we said
24 well, 60 is a better number we think. I don't know how
25 that process worked or how we did it, but -- or even
26 what information that we looked at. However, we
27 addressed the quota before. So we need to perhaps
28 address it again. But exactly how we're going to do
29 that, I don't know.

30
31 When I was talking I didn't think we
32 would fast track and take over all the wolf management.
33 That wasn't my idea. But if we had some say in it, we
34 could make adjustment to -- through the harvest levels
35 or whatever in a timely fashion because the State is on
36 a three year cycle.

37
38 So that's what I was talking about. I
39 didn't think we could make a checkmark and fix this
40 thing instantly. It just doesn't work that way. But
41 on the other hand, we can't even submit a proposal. So
42 -- but how we could address the quota and some of the
43 issues with it is I guess a question that I would have
44 for somebody that knows how the system works.

45
46 MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Douville. Through
47 the Chair. I'm not totally sure of the question, but
48 you're correct that the Federal and State call for
49 proposals are about a year out of synch this go around.

50

1 So given that, I think it's very important that we --
2 you know, we work closely with the State on this wolf
3 issue.

4
5 I hate to give my recommendation, but
6 my thoughts are that maybe come up with some sort of an
7 overall management idea plan, whatever you want to call
8 it. And then from that figure out which proposals may
9 be best submitted to the Federal system and which ones
10 may be best submitted to the State system.

11
12 But just from my experience having
13 doing proposals between the State and Federal systems
14 that are out of synch is kind of sometimes counter
15 productive. But that's just totally my -- from my
16 experience. So how you approach it is of course your
17 prerogative.

18
19 Thank you.

20
21 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Terry.

22
23 Any other ideas.

24
25 MS. NEEDHAM: I have a question.

26
27 CHAIRMAN BANGS: A question. Ms.
28 Needham.

29
30 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31
32 Terry, so what Mr. Douville is
33 recommending is that we address the quota. And that is
34 in State regulation, correct? And not Federal
35 regulation that this call for proposals is on. So if
36 we put a proposal before the Federal Subsistence Board
37 regarding quota, is that even a valid proposal to do?

38
39 MR. SUMINSKI: Ms. Needham, the --
40 again I think it would be awkward. Because you're
41 correct the requirement for the 20 percent of the fall
42 population, you know, and calculation of the quota is
43 in State regulation. The only thing that's in our
44 regulation is that the Federal hunting and trapping
45 seasons may be closed when the combined State Federal
46 harvest quota is reached.

47
48 So what that means is we decide on a
49 quota. And generally it's the -- you know, based on
50

1 the State regulation using the 20 percent calculation
2 and some other factors after that that I don't really
3 want to get into right now. But the -- so if we set a
4 separate -- I think it would just be awkward.

5
6 I mean because you would -- well, would
7 you set a separate quota and somehow share a quota or
8 -- you know, because we're talking about a pretty good
9 mix of State and Federal lands on the island. It could
10 get -- and that's why I think it's very important to
11 try to work with the State and work on a coherent body
12 of regulations for the wolf issue on Prince of Wales or
13 Unit 2.

14
15 Thank you.

16
17 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Terry.

18
19 Mr. Douville.

20
21 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22
23 I'm not saying that we can't work with
24 the State, but things are -- I don't know how to put
25 it. But we have a separate system for deer that's
26 totally different from the State. And we regulate
27 that. How would we do that. I mean we can do these
28 things and do it right. We're not trying to upset the
29 apple cart. But, you know, we need to -- I don't know
30 how we do it, but we do do things like that.

31
32 Steelhead's another example. Some
33 things just aren't going to be the same because this is
34 a rural priority. And we are losing out on a
35 subsistence species as a result because some of the
36 State regulations are -- you know, they look at it
37 different. They don't look at Title VIII.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
40 Douville.

41
42 I have a question that possibly would
43 be for Mr. Scott. Is this is apparently in my view of
44 what's going on here is this is a conservation concern.
45 Not necessarily with wolves, but the ramifications of
46 what the wolf population is doing. Would this be
47 something that could be addressed by the Board of Game
48 out of cycle as an emergency order.

49
50

1 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
2 For the record, I'm Ryan Scott with the Division of
3 Wildlife Conservation.
4

5 And I just want to make sure I have the
6 context of the question right. Increasing -- is the
7 question around increasing the wolf quota out of cycle?
8 Is that the -- taking that proposal to the Board of
9 Game out of cycle to let's say bump it back up to 30
10 percent? Is that the -- make sure I understand the
11 question.
12

13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: No. What I'm saying
14 is if our cycle out of cycle with your cycle.
15

16 (Laughter)
17

18 CHAIRMAN BANGS: That we try to work
19 them together to make this happen sooner than later.
20 So if we went to the Board of Game with an out of cycle
21 proposal because of the situation that we could work
22 together with Federal and the State and make it happen.
23

24
25 MR. SCOTT: Thank you. Yes, Mr.
26 Chairman. I think there's the opportunity there. You
27 know, there's three criteria that an out of cycle -- an
28 agenda change request has to meet. And I'm not going
29 to remember all three, but unintended consequences for
30 a regulation, a biological emergency, and there's a
31 third one -- phoning a friend. That didn't work.
32

33 (Laughter)
34

35 MR. SCOTT: You know, certainly we've
36 heard a lot today that I think would be -- the Board to
37 be interested in. Specifically on deer numbers and
38 things like that. I also think that there's a lot of
39 factors at play as far as the deer numbers go.
40

41 So I -- you know, I -- there is an
42 opportunity to bring that before the Board. So because
43 of our -- the two regulatory mechanisms are out of
44 synch. And I would remind the RAC that this time next
45 year proposals for the Board of Game will be due for
46 Southeast and then they would go through a meeting in
47 January of '19. So we're -- you know, we're 18 months
48 out and I don't know what the cycle will ultimately be
49 for OSM, but just to give you a little bit of a
50

1 timeline.

2

3

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.

4

5

Mr. Douville.

6

7

MR. DOUVILLE: While we've got you sitting there, I have a question for you. How is the 50 percent deduction from the quota -- how did you do that? Who participated in it? And I know originally where it came from, but how did you do it this time? Obviously, administratively somehow, but who were the participants in that decision?

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MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member Douville. So as -- we did it administratively, like you said. And as we -- frankly, we looked at it as what we did last year. To continue that. The people involved would have been me, the district ranger here in Craig, the OSM Staff as well, our wolf staff as well. And as I have said, you know, numerous times to this body as well as to individuals, we should have talked to you. We should have come and said, you know, this is what we're thinking. And we want to be conservative, to go down this road again. Yes, we think we see an uptick in the wolf numbers. It looks real to us. But it's not extensive and we'd like to approach it conservatively.

And as you have mentioned as well, then the previous year was done with a lot of consultation as well. So it's a -- that's how it was done. And certainly I -- as I've told this group of people in Petersburg -- it won't be done that way again.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Douville and then Mr. Yeager.

MR. DOUVILLE: Okay. Just as a comment, the first year you did that it kind of slipped by because the quota was so small. But hey, wait a minute. What happened here. I wasn't trapping. But this year I looked at it again and I was like wait a minute. This is -- and that's when you got the feedback. Kind of slipped by everybody the first year. So you didn't see much feedback till this year's quota.

But anyway, I appreciate that you would

1 include a little broader scope when you do have the
2 decision-making process when it comes to that down the
3 road.

4
5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mike.

6
7 Mr. Yeager.

8
9 MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10
11 Simply you could just administratively
12 change it. That would be an easy fix. But that was
13 just a joke.

14
15 (Laughter)

16
17 MR. YEAGER: Actually, is a proposal
18 the best way to present this issue to you? Or is there
19 another vessel that would also be appropriate to either
20 precede a proposal or go along with the proposal? You
21 see what we're trying to do here. So just don't beat
22 around the bush. Let's just say what we've got to say.

23
24 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member
25 Yeager, so I will answer the initial question though.
26 So yes, we could deal with the 50 percent. And I think
27 in our testimony -- both mine and Director Dale -- were
28 it's time to get out of this hole, you know, for sure.

29
30 And I can't sit here at this juncture
31 and say we are going to remove that from next year's
32 quota. But it's a point in discussion obviously. I
33 mean we've got to deal with it.

34
35 All of sitting here -- OSM, the Staff
36 here on the District -- so that's the answer to the
37 first part.

38
39 The next part, the proposal has to
40 happen actually. It's in regulation and, you know,
41 even throughout the last several months having
42 conversations about this topic, you know, I've
43 continued to learn how things happened and how things
44 ended up where they were. Bottom line is it's in the
45 book. It's written there. It has to go through the
46 Board of Game process. I think that there's potential
47 merit to take it to the Board out of cycle. I can't
48 promise you. The Board makes that decision. But
49 certainly if -- I mean I'm here and our Staff is here

50

1 to help with that proposal if we want to, you know, go
2 that way.

3
4 And I also would be -- I wish I had the
5 codified book with me. It does say up to 20 percent or
6 30 percent. And I think that's important for all of
7 us. You know, that we've had -- and one of the things
8 that's actually been very, very nice today -- and, you
9 know, I certainly have had other conversations that
10 included it -- we've had people bring suggestions and a
11 sliding scale. You know, that's one way that I've
12 interpreted some of the information that -- or ideas.
13 You know, if the number's here we can manage for 30
14 percent. If it's down here we manage for 20 percent.
15 Things like that.

16
17 So it's that kind of thing that's going
18 to help us move forward. But to just cut to the chase,
19 you know, I would say that we need to do some work on
20 if there is a reduction or what level of reduction in
21 the coming year. We even had, you know, suggestions
22 for that. And then a Board of Game proposal is
23 necessary on the State side.

24
25 And, you know, one more thing to think
26 about. If they don't take it up in the regular cycle,
27 I mean it would put us, you know, a little bit farther
28 out of synch. But at the same time we would be coming
29 right up on it. And so then the proposal would just go
30 in as a Southeast Regional proposal.

31
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Schroeder.

33
34 MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Chairman. This has
35 been a really informative meeting on this issue. And
36 of necessity, you know, we have to talk -- if we're
37 talking about managing wolves or there's a set of
38 regulations concerning managing wolves and then -- but
39 what we've heard in this meeting is that at least some
40 island hunters and island residents see it's really the
41 wolf/deer dynamic.

42
43 And so that has two aspects to it. One
44 is that if dissatisfaction with harvest opportunities
45 on Prince of Wales increases and we, meaning the
46 Federal system and the State system, does not address
47 that, it won't just go away. That just won't go away
48 if -- and people won't wait, you know, meetings out
49 there. Just when this issue was really hot, which was
50

1 something like 15 years ago, both the Federal and the
2 State system spent an inordinate amount of time and
3 effort trying to address people's inability to harvest
4 deer. And we had to put a huge amount of effort into
5 regulatory changes that resulted in giving island
6 residents a slight jump on off-island residents.

7
8 So anyone who was around during that
9 time would not say oh, yeah. Let's just do this again.
10 If we can forestall that, that would be really good.

11
12 The other thing that comes to mind is
13 just talking with Mr. Christianson. And I appreciated
14 his very well spoken testimony. And it's been a real
15 effort to get Prince of Wales residents to buy into the
16 regulatory system. To believe in it and to see the
17 rationale behind it and to participate. And I think
18 based on Mr. Christianson's testimony, we risk really
19 hurting ourselves there. And that if people feel they
20 have a reason to -- if they're not getting redress from
21 the Federal or State system, they just might not follow
22 the rules.

23
24 And in my previous work I had the
25 opportunity to interview people and all over Prince of
26 Wales Island. And I do remember one study where I was
27 interviewing expert hunters and then for some reason I
28 put in -- my last question was well, let's see. You
29 have all these ideas about what should happen here.
30 People were complaining a lot about spotlighting at
31 that time. And so I said, well, gee. How many times
32 have you stopped by an enforcement officer to show your
33 license and been checked. And I didn't find anybody
34 who ever got checked.

35
36 And so the only thing enforcing the
37 regulations was what was in somebody's heart. That
38 they actually believed that this was a good way of
39 handling our resources.

40
41 So I think we risk ignoring what we
42 hear -- or not acting on it, I think we risk really
43 hurting that goodwill and pushing things in another
44 direction.

45
46 Thank you.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
49 Schroeder.

50

1 Any other comments or questions.
2
3 (No comments)
4
5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Online -- oh, Ms.
6 Needham.
7
8 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
9
10 So am I understanding this right,
11 Terry? That there's a -- is there actually a call for
12 Federal wildlife proposals out? Or was that the thing
13 that Ms. Perry was talking about that it's not open
14 yet. I'm wondering how much time we have to submit a
15 wildlife proposal on the wolf issue. Like how much --
16 for Federal regulations.
17
18 MR. SUMINSKI: Ms. Needham. Through
19 the Chair. When the proposal is announced officially
20 and when it's able to be published in the Federal
21 Register, I believe there's 30 -- it has to be
22 published for at least 30 days.
23
24 MS. HARDIN: 90.
25
26 MR. SUMINSKI: 90? Oh. In the book it
27 says 30. Okay. Good. I'm glad I checked.
28
29 (Laughter)
30
31 MR. SUMINSKI: So it's got to be out for
32 three months. So the issue is that you won't meet --
33 well, I shouldn't say that. I don't know how long it's
34 going take to get it out. But you may not -- it may be
35 due before your next meeting, is what I'm saying. So
36 as a body, this would be the time to submit it.
37
38 And like you said, OSM was willing to
39 accept those proposals and hold them until the, you
40 know, time that they can be officially accepted.
41
42 And one thing I did want to back up
43 just slightly. And I didn't want to -- you know, I
44 wasn't challenging Mike. And he did have a valid
45 proposal and we could certainly submit the proposal.
46 You know, so don't get me wrong. I was just -- I
47 thought you were asking me that -- you know, what would
48 be -- you know, what that effect of that would be.
49
50

1 And we don't really need to analyze the
2 proposals at this point. So the idea is if you want to
3 put a proposal, that would have been a valid proposal.
4 So thank you.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: We're just asking to
7 fix it.

8
9 (Laughter)

10
11 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. Go ahead.

14
15 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
16 Bangs. This is Patricia Phillips. So I would like to
17 see you submit a proposal on the line of what Mr.
18 Douville was suggesting on, you know, the sliding
19 scale. And also do we submit a proposal to the Board
20 of Game to ask them reconsider. Or, you know, do --
21 you know, should the Council take action recommending
22 that we submit a letter to the regulatory bodies, State
23 and Federal, to proceed with the administrative change
24 that was suggested until a regulatory change can go
25 into place. And I'm not real clear on that.

26
27 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Who would best be able
28 to answer that.

29
30 (Laughter)

31
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Scott.

33
34 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Chairman Bangs.
35 Again, I think the answer, at least from the State
36 side, from the Department side, is, probably come up
37 with a proposal and see if it would be taken up out of
38 cycle and then, but be prepared for that not to happen
39 and have it fit into the regular cycle as well.

40
41 You know a letter of support from this
42 body, from the RAC is going to be great, but you're
43 also talking about making the proposal so they're going
44 to know, you know, they should know that you guys
45 support it. But it's just whether or not it would get
46 accepted.

47
48 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Mr. Chair.
49 I would recommend that we submit the proposal that Mr.
50

1 Douville has brought forward.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms.
4 Phillips.

5

6 We have a follow up by Ms. Needham and
7 then we have a comment by Ms. Hardin.

8

9 Ms. Needham.

10

11 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
12 I was asking about the timing of this proposal -- this
13 cycle for the call for Federal wildlife proposals,
14 because my understanding is -- well, I guess my
15 question is do we have to have that proposal written by
16 this meeting or is it possible for us to -- if it has
17 to be published in the Federal Register for 90 days can
18 we have a workgroup actually write that proposal and
19 then maybe do a telephone vote of the whole Council.
20 Like we leave here with the intent that we will put
21 together a proposal but maybe we don't have the details
22 of whether we're going from 20 percent to 30 percent,
23 or whether or not we're using the sliding scale, we
24 haven't made that decision yet necessarily at this
25 meeting, but we can still submit a proposal after we
26 leave this meeting so that it can either go to the
27 Federal wildlife proposal, like Mr. Douville is
28 suggesting and have it entertained by the State as an
29 out of cycle. Is that possible to do it that way.

30

31 MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman.

32

33 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Just one moment, we
34 have a question on the floor.

35

36 MR. WRIGHT: Okay.

37

38 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Ms. Hardin.

39

40 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Ms.
41 Needham.

42

43 Just to add on to what Terry had
44 mentioned, Terry is correct that we must publish --
45 first of all I want to say we must publish for 30 days
46 and I have heard no -- but we typically publish for 90
47 when it comes to these proposals, and I've received no
48 indication from management at OSM or the Board that we
49 would do a shorter window.

50

1 In addition, what we need from the
2 Council today is for you all to make decisions on the
3 record about what proposals you'd like to submit to the
4 Federal Subsistence Board and with the intent for your
5 coordinator to finalize those once the call comes out
6 and submit them at that time.

7
8 Now, what I'm hearing you say, if you
9 could come to an agreement of the contours of your
10 proposal in terms of what the species is, what you're
11 requesting to do, in this case I think it -- I don't
12 want to speak for the Council but I've heard you talk
13 about changing the language regarding the quota, then
14 -- and you were to vote on that and the Council was to
15 approve that, then the specifics, and then you were on
16 the record to vote to finalize the wording through a
17 subcommittee, I don't see a problem with that as long
18 as it's really clear on the record what the Council
19 intends to do and that it's the will of the Council to
20 move forward.

21
22 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms. Hardin.

23
24 There was a question from someone on
25 line.

26
27 MR. WRIGHT: Yeah, this is Frank.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Go ahead, Frank.

30
31 MR. WRIGHT: I was just wondering, you
32 know, the proposal doesn't really have to come from the
33 RAC, it could come from the community of Craig. And
34 another thing is, you know, if you put a proposal
35 together doesn't each agency, like the Feds -- I mean
36 the Department of Fish and Game say they are against of
37 for when the proposal comes out, and then we go forward
38 with that and then our Council says that we move to
39 support; is that the process?

40
41 And this proposal could be written and
42 submitted and then they'll have it on hand.

43
44 This is just what I'm thinking about
45 and if I need to be corrected, please.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Frank.

48
49 Ms. Hardin.

50

1 MS. HARDIN: Through the Chair. That's
2 correct. The Council could put forward a proposal and
3 any member of the public or community could put forward
4 proposals also and those proposals don't have to be
5 discussed here, they can be but they don't have to be.
6 It's just the proposals that the Council, as a -- the
7 Council would like to submit to the Board that need to
8 go through, go on to the public record and have
9 discussion today, but, that's correct.

10
11 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms. Hardin.

12
13 Mr. Schroeder.

14
15 MR. SCHROEDER: Just a note of process
16 here. Although the Council, for a number of years
17 hasn't done this, in the past when things needed to be
18 acted on apart from our regular scheduled meetings, the
19 Council has had noticed teleconference meetings that
20 worked just fine in terms of the Administrative
21 Procedure Act. So, in other words, if we needed more
22 time on something we can potentially, assuming that
23 that provision still exists, we can have a
24 teleconference meeting that is a noticed meeting and
25 subject to our other rules of having a quorum and
26 allowing public testimony, et cetera.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
29 Schroeder.

30
31 I'm thinking, I'll have to ask Mr.
32 Douville, but I'm wondering if this proposal would be
33 better crafted by the stakeholder, such as the Craig
34 Tribal and Hyda Association and the Trapping
35 Association here on Prince of Wales and submitted to
36 the Federal system, which will come before us and then
37 it's worded the way that they want it worded and --
38 because they're the experts and then we would recommend
39 or not recommend to accept that proposal.

40
41 Would that be a better way of going
42 about it.

43
44 Mr. Douville.

45
46 MR. DOUVILLE: I'm not at an expert at
47 crafting proposals.

48
49 (Laughter)

50

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Ms. Needham.

2

3 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4

5 My question about that process that you
6 just recommended, would we still be able to leave this
7 meeting with having a proposal in for the Federal
8 wildlife proposal -- call for Federal wildlife
9 proposals. That's kind of -- I mean that's the topic
10 that we're on, we're at the call for Federal wildlife
11 proposals and it sounds to me like we want to try to
12 get something started with addressing the wolf concern
13 that we've heard about. Whether it goes through the
14 Federal system or the State system, we can try to align
15 by asking for an out of cycle consideration on it, but
16 if we put it through to the Federal call for proposals
17 now at least it gets into the system and starts to move
18 forward. And then within that we'll have the analysis
19 on it, we can potentially pull it later, like Mr.
20 Wright suggested if it needs to be something that the
21 Board of Game addresses at that point. And bringing
22 the stakeholders in to determine what that proposal
23 looks like, seems like we're not going to be able to do
24 it at this meeting. However, we did hear public
25 testimony that came up with -- a couple different
26 testimonies, the option to use this 160 population
27 threshold and manage at 30 percent and when the
28 population is 160 manage at 20 percent.

29

30 So maybe that's the proposal we can
31 craft and submit for this call for the Federal system
32 to get it in there and then work with this idea of
33 asking for the State out of cycle consideration.

34

35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Cathy. And
36 we can always amend the proposal once it comes back to
37 us as well.

38

39 So what's the will of the Council.

40

41 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.

42

43 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Ms. Phillips.

44

45 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes, thank you. So
46 adding on to what Ms. Needham was talking about, then
47 that would put it into the capable hands of our
48 coordinator who could craft the proposal to reflect the
49 Council's wishes.

50

1 Thank you.

2
3 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms.
4 Phillips.

5
6 Any other questions or comments, or
7 discussion.

8
9 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, this is Don
10 Hernandez.

11
12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Don.

13
14 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. I don't know if
15 I was talking over somebody there, is there anybody
16 else.

17
18
19 (No comments)

20
21 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. I guess I have a
22 question, I'm all in favor of going forward with the
23 proposal. I think I like the suggested one about
24 having the baseline with a lesser quota/baseline higher
25 quota above that baseline of 160, that sounds pretty
26 reasonable. I guess my question is how important is it
27 for us to be worrying about aligning State and Federal
28 regulations at this time with an out of cycle proposal.
29 It seems to me and maybe Ryan Scott might want to weigh
30 in on this, but if we were to put a proposal through
31 the Federal system and if it should pass, then it might
32 be sort of incumbent on the State to decide if they
33 want to align with that or not. I know we do try and
34 align as much as possible. But, you know, the Federal
35 regulation would affect probably about 90 percent of
36 the harvest, if not more, so, you know, I think I'm
37 saying that we should not be worrying about out of
38 cycle proposals, I mean we should just leave that up to
39 the State and see what they would want to do we they
40 got one passed.

41
42 So I don't know maybe Ryan might want
43 to comment on the importance of aligning proposals at
44 the same time.

45
46 MS. PHILLIPS: Good Don.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Mr. Scott.

49
50

1 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
2 We're rapidly moving out of my area of expertise and
3 moving into a place where, you know, we find --
4 potentially we're going to find Federal regulations and
5 State regulations in conflict, and I've got lots of red
6 flags going off in my head about that.

7
8 Certainly, I recognize that what this
9 body does and takes to the Federal Subsistence Board
10 will impact the lion's share of wolf users. With that
11 said, there's other people who utilize wolves here as
12 well. And so while we certainly would want to, you
13 know, continue to try to keep the regulations in synch
14 because I think that makes it, maybe not easy, but it
15 makes it fair for, you know, the different players, it
16 -- I don't want -- you know, I can't predict will
17 happen with a Board of Game proposal.

18
19 You know the sliding scale or moving
20 along the -- having this number, I think we have to
21 think really hard about what number we use to put in
22 the middle of that sliding scale. That's not a
23 judgment or anything else about what the number that's
24 been proposed or thrown out there, but is that, you
25 know, is that the one, I don't know. I mean is there a
26 process to figure that out. Is there more things that
27 we should consider to go up and down, you know, from
28 that.

29
30 Those are some thoughts.

31
32 And, Member Hernandez, is correct, you
33 know, if a Federal proposal goes forward it will, you
34 know, it will address the majority of the users here
35 but it also, you know, I'm not sure what else is going
36 to happen with that and down the road, you know, the
37 down stream impact of that.

38
39 A thought on the Board of Game
40 proposal, however it gets submitted, whether it's
41 attempted to take it out of cycle or to wait until the
42 regular cycle comes in, changing it back -- the wording
43 back to up to 30 percent would cover the gamut, you
44 know, that gives everybody -- you know, we can go up to
45 30 percent but, you know, once this number is figured
46 out we could keep it down to 20 percent, and using, you
47 know, a process that we've talked a lot about here, you
48 know, and talked about how to come up with an annual
49 number.

50

1 Just a thought and a comment.

2

3 But, truly, I guess I would have to
4 seek additional help and information, you know, if we
5 start to diverge where right now a joint quota is
6 announced.

7

8 I'm not sure that would be the case if
9 we go down this road.

10

11 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.

12

13 I think we will have additional data by
14 the time it comes around as well.

15

16 So, Ms. Needham, did you have a follow
17 up.

18

19 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
20 mean I agree with Mr. Scott in some respects. I
21 understand that we don't have all the answers today in
22 terms of what the correct number is, but I also feel
23 that submitting a proposal in this call for Federal
24 wildlife proposals at this time does two things if we
25 submit one on the wolf based on what we have now, kind
26 of serves two things.

27

28 We have the option to change it later,
29 after the analysis is done, so it gets that process
30 started that actually works towards addressing or gets
31 us closer to a solution in two years, right, because
32 it's going to take that long for the Federal proposal,
33 if it got accepted, to be put into effect.

34

35 If we don't submit the proposal, then
36 we haven't done anything.

37

38 But if we do submit the proposal we
39 have time to kind of develop it, it forces the issue.
40 It forces the clock to start ticking and I think we can
41 still work together in the interim. We'll have the
42 next RAC meeting to refine it if we need to, to be able
43 to work and to have the answers that we need from the
44 State.

45

46 I mean I would like to see us try to
47 submit the proposal and get it into the system, get the
48 wheels turning and, you know, I mean the call for
49 proposals hasn't even come out yet and then at our next

50

1 meeting we have an actual proposal in there that we
2 either need to refine or we'll know how to take a
3 better tactic but if we don't submit the proposal then
4 by the next meeting, what will we have done.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Cathy.

7

8 Mr. Douville.

9

10 MR. DOUVILLE: I agree with you, Cathy.
11 That a proposal could be withdrawn. It may not pass
12 muster. There's a lot of things that would happen but
13 one thing it would do, it would generate information.

14

15 On the other hand I have not seen any
16 effort from the State to address this, we're still at
17 the status quo as far as I know, I mean we've had some
18 conversation but I haven't heard anything that makes me
19 think that what the State's doing today is going to
20 change.

21

22 So that's kind of where I feel that
23 we're at.

24

25 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Reifenstuhl.

26

27 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

28

29 I agree with Cathy on this.

30

31 I think that initiating, this is a
32 Federal proposal, will generate quite a bit of
33 information, that will be vetted by the Federal
34 biologists and probably there'll be some interface with
35 the State biologists as well in that process and then
36 we'll have another chance to look at it.

37

38 On the State side of it, it's called an
39 agenda change request, and I don't know the deadline of
40 the meeting, I've been trying to look it up here on --
41 there's a deadline for agenda change requests but I'm
42 not sure what that is, but I've done a few of those and
43 if you don't have the support of the Department on
44 something like this, I mean that's where the Board of
45 Game is going to get their information, they're going
46 to want to know the science of it and there are three
47 criteria that I could read off, but we probably don't
48 need to hear them right now, so I would suggest if you
49 want to do that, you would have to -- you should work

50

1 closely with the Department on crafting such an agenda
2 change request and if it was going to be the 30 percent
3 -- if they're flat out opposed to that, I mean you
4 would raise it in terms of having it considered but
5 they would probably reject it, would be my guess.

6
7 But I have heard some support for the
8 concept of up to 30 percent. So I guess what I would
9 suggest is the RAC does not deal with that agenda
10 change request, but I suggest that the local people, if
11 you want to pursue that, it's not difficult to write an
12 agenda change request, and mostly you need the
13 information that you've been stating here to craft that
14 document and it's only a one page, and then work with
15 the local area management biologists at Fish and Game,
16 as well as Mr. Scott, and I think you'll be able to
17 find out whether that has a chance of being heard out
18 of cycle.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Steve.

21
22 Mr. Douville.

23
24 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you. I was only
25 joking when I said that I couldn't do proposals. I do
26 have the experience and can do that, I was just hoping
27 that Cathy would do it.

28
29 (Laughter)

30
31 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.

32
33 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Ms. Phillips.

34
35 MS. PHILLIPS: If the Board of Game
36 will not take it up early, then they still have their
37 process that accepts proposals in a year and then
38 whatever, you know, whatever proposal we are already
39 working on at the Federal program can be submitted in
40 their timeline if they do not take it up earlier.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Patty.

43
44 Any other ideas or comments from the
45 Council.

46
47 Cathy.

48
49 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I

50

1 was wondering if we could agree to have the proposal
2 crafted by our coordinator and move on to other
3 potential Federal wildlife proposals that we might
4 consider.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Cathy. Is
7 there someone on line that tried to speak.

8
9
10 (No comments)

11
12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I agree with
13 Cathy. I think we should move forward and start to
14 craft a proposal so we could move on.

15
16 So would you have a start to it, Cathy.

17
18 Okay, Mr. Schroeder first and then
19 Cathy.

20
21 MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
22 Earlier in the meeting we got a great report from
23 Jennifer Hardin on proposal changes and where we stand
24 on the customary and traditional use determination
25 process. This has been something that this Council has
26 been working on for at least five or six years, there
27 was a working group on that. We submitted our letter
28 and recommendation to the Federal Subsistence Board at
29 different points in time and received a response saying
30 that the Federal Board would defer to the Council on
31 customary and traditional use determinations.

32
33 What we have for customary and
34 traditional use determinations for Southeast is a bit
35 of a patchwork of customary and traditional use
36 determinations, many of which were inherited from the
37 State system prior to Federal assumption of management,
38 as well as ones that were crafted earlier in the
39 program when kind of the rules for customary and
40 traditional use were a bit different than they are
41 since this last review.

42
43 In our last writings to the Federal
44 Subsistence Board we decided that we may submit
45 proposals to get customary and traditional use
46 determinations for our region to align a little bit
47 better with the way this Council sees the world, which
48 is that in general customary and traditional use
49 determinations should be quite broad, perhaps including
50

1 all rural residents for most species and that when
2 there is a time of shortage that the Federal Program
3 should use Section .804 procedures to discriminate
4 among subsistence users and Section .804, that refers
5 to times when all subsistence uses can't be met and
6 there are criteria in ANILCA for doing that.

7

8 That isn't something that has come
9 before the Council before.

10

11 So we asked Jennifer if this would be a
12 reasonable time to do some of this work and so I'd like
13 to get the will of the Council on whether anything's
14 happened since the last time we talked about this on if
15 this is a direction we should proceed and then if this
16 is something the Council wants to do I have a
17 suggestion where we might get started.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Schroeder, is this
22 a point that you're going to bring around to discussing
23 the wolf proposal?

24

25 MR. SCHROEDER: I thought we were up to
26 our next wildlife proposal.

27

28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: I wanted to make sure
29 that if anybody had any more questions, and I thought
30 you had another question about wolves -- okay, my
31 fault. I wanted to make sure everybody had cleared
32 that.

33

34 Okay, Mr. Schroeder.

35

36 MR. SCHROEDER: Okay. So we're up to
37 considering crafting a customary and traditional use
38 proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board so we have --
39 there's a listing of quite a few differences -- quite a
40 few -- well, if you look in your regulation book you
41 can see who has customary and traditional use for what
42 for each of our five management units for our region.
43 And we also have some background information which we
44 would submit along with the proposal, is OSM's summary
45 of when -- of what determinations came over from 1992
46 and which ones were changed as of the present time.
47 That's a handout that I have right here, I just printed
48 a few copies, and the reason for this is this would be
49 submitted with any proposal that we did.

50

1 I haven't talked at length with anybody
2 about this. My personal suggestion would be, yes, I
3 think we want to go ahead and get the customary and
4 traditional use determinations to line up with our idea
5 of making them general, where possible, since that's
6 what this Council worked on for five or six years. And
7 -- but that we don't take on the whole show at this
8 moment, but that we choose one species where we have
9 really strong information, and where there don't appear
10 to be quite as many complexities but, is, yet, really
11 important to the users of this region, and so that
12 would be deer for Southeast.

13
14 So, I guess, I'd like to get the will
15 of the Council to see if this is something that we
16 should proceed on.

17
18 Thank you.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Are there any
21 questions or discussion from the Council.

22
23
24 (No comments)

25
26 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Is there anyone on
27 line.

28
29 MR. HERNANDEZ: Mr. Chairman.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Don.

32
33 MR. HERNANDEZ: Don Hernandez, again.

34
35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Go ahead, Don.

36
37 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, since yesterday I
38 guess I've been thinking on the same lines as Mr.
39 Schroeder about how we might address this and given our
40 presentation on where we are in customary and
41 traditional use determinations, I am in total agreement
42 with Mr. Schroeder that it's time for a proposal and I
43 was thinking the same thing, probably one species at a
44 time, most obvious and easy to analyze for the region
45 would be deer. And I think we ought to put in a
46 proposal for a region-wide customary and traditional
47 use determination for deer.

48
49 And I think my only question to the

50

1 rest of the Council would be how would we deal with
2 Unit 5. I think it's pretty obvious in Units 1 through
3 4, we could do a blanket customary and traditional use
4 proposal, but I'm going to need some discussion on
5 whether or not Unit 5 would be included, or residents
6 of Yakutat, essentially.

7

8 That's my comment.

9

10 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Don.
11 Do any of the Council members have any comments or do
12 they agree with that suggestion.

13

14 Mr. Schroeder.

15

16 MR. SCHROEDER: So if we followed
17 through with Don's suggestion and I also think that
18 deer is the place to start, what we would end up with
19 would be a customary and traditional use regulation
20 that would say that all rural residents have customary
21 and traditional use of deer in Units 1 through 5 and
22 Don was talking about some discussion about Yakutat.
23 We may also -- something else to consider would be, we
24 may want to say all rural residents of Southeast
25 Alaska, given that other Councils didn't really agree
26 with our approach to customary and traditional use
27 determinations.

28

29 Thank you.

30

31 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.
32 Schroeder.

33

34 Don, would you rather see it -- which
35 way would you rather see that proposal written.

36

37 MR. HERNANDEZ: Well, I would qualify
38 Mr. Schroeder's proposal a little bit.

39

40 I had no intention of this proposal
41 including all rural residents of the state. I think
42 that's kind of the way he worded it, I would say all
43 rural residents residing in Units 1 through 4 would
44 have customary and traditional use of deer in Units 1
45 through 4. And then we may want to do a separate
46 proposal dealing with Unit 5, I don't know. Possibly
47 saying that -- that might not be a change, for Unit 5
48 it probably already is, residents of Yakutat have
49 customary and traditional use of Unit 5.

50

1 So a little bit of discussion there but
2 definitely rural residents of Units 1 through 4 have
3 customary and traditional use of deer in Units 1
4 through 4.

5
6 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Okay. So we
7 have a potential proposal that we would like to put
8 forward regarding customary and traditional use of deer
9 and it might need a little bit of wordsmithing and I'm
10 wondering if Mr. Schroeder would take the lead on
11 helping craft that proposal for us to look at tomorrow
12 and potentially call Mr. Hernandez if you had
13 questions.

14
15 I couldn't hear you.

16
17 MR. SCHROEDER: I'm not sure whether
18 Ms. Phillips is on the line, I'd really appreciate her
19 input on this before we proceed.

20
21 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Okay. Ms.
22 Phillips, are you on line and could you comment back
23 regarding this potential proposal that we're going to
24 put forward.

25
26 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
27 Needham. Sorry, I accidentally hung up.

28
29 So Mr. Schroeder's proposed proposal, I
30 would agree with Mr. Hernandez, in that, Unit 1 through
31 4, would be all rural residents of -- residents of Unit
32 4 -- all rural residents of Units 1 through 4, and then
33 Unit 5 would follow a similar C&T determination as with
34 their moose. So I mean it just seems to make sense.

35
36 That's how I feel about it.

37
38 Thank you.

39
40 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Ms.
41 Phillips.

42
43 Mr. Schroeder, do you feel you have
44 enough information to craft a proposal for us to look
45 at and approve for this call for proposals tomorrow?

46
47 MR. SCHROEDER: I think I'd be pretty
48 close. Just to Council Members Hernandez and Phillips,
49 I'm wondering whether separating out Unit 5, I'm not

50

1 clear whether you want to separate out Unit 5 in one
2 way or two ways.

3
4 Separating it out in one way would be
5 to say that there isn't customary and traditional use
6 of deer in Unit 5, except by residents of Unit 5.
7 Separating out Unit 5 residents would mean that
8 residents of Unit 5 would not have customary and
9 traditional use of deer in Units 1 through 4. That
10 would mean that at the present time residents of
11 Yakutat have customary and traditional use of deer in
12 Unit 4, so this would be taking away a recognition that
13 is already there. I'm not sure whether that's your
14 intention.

15
16 Over.

17
18 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Robert.
19 Yeah, we definitely have to take a close look at what
20 the present C&T is for Yakutat. And, yeah, I think it
21 would probably be best to do something like residents
22 of Yakutat would have customary and traditional use of
23 deer in Units 1 through 4 as well.

24
25 I guess the only other question would
26 be, would residents of 1 through 4 have customary and
27 traditional use of deer in Unit 5, I guess that would
28 be the main question.

29
30 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.
31 Hernandez.

32
33 Mr. Schroeder.

34
35 MR. SCHROEDER: I don't have really a
36 dog in this fight except to have something go through
37 and follow the intention of the Council's policy on
38 customary and traditional use. I think what we wanted
39 was that if there was a place where all subsistence
40 users who not hunt, that we would go through an .804
41 proceeding that would recognize the three factors that
42 apply, which are dependence on the resource, proximity
43 to the resource and availability of other resources.

44
45 So that would be where, if you were
46 following the .804, you would say there isn't customary
47 -- there isn't hunting allowed for anyone but Unit 5
48 residents for deer in Unit 5.

49
50

1 We will point out that there's hardly
2 been a great rush to hunt deer, which are very rare, in
3 Unit 5.

4
5 Thank you.

6
7 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.
8 Schroeder.

9
10 Mr. Hernandez and Ms. Phillips, do you
11 both feel comfortable with Mr. Schroeder moving forward
12 to craft a Federal wildlife proposal on this customary
13 and traditional use for deer.

14
15 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.

16
17 MR. HERNANDEZ: This is Don, yes, also.

18
19 And I do recognize that, you know,
20 Yakutat is kind of a different circumstance there
21 because there are so few deer, so without having a
22 member from Yakutat, you know, to ask about this
23 situation, what would be the best, but I believe we
24 should get something drafted up for everybody to look
25 at and move forward with.

26
27 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Okay, thank you.

28
29 Mr. Schroeder.

30
31 MR. SCHROEDER: And just to put on the
32 record, something else that we had considered in this
33 line, is the main background is our long and thorough
34 discussion of the way we believe customary and
35 traditional use determinations should be made so that's
36 our strongest rationale.

37
38 And then our other rationale, what are
39 we fixing here, is, that at the present time, at least
40 one of the things we're fixing is that if someone goes
41 from their home community and is visiting a friend or
42 relative in another Southeast community, at the present
43 time they may not be able to hunt there under
44 subsistence regulations and this doesn't seem to be
45 within the spirit of subsistence where people do hunt
46 with family members and someone may be visiting their
47 wife or husband's family someplace and it doesn't seem
48 that they should not have the ability to do subsistence
49 harvesting in this other location.

50

1 Thank you.

2

3 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.
4 Schroeder.

5

6 So we've now decided to put forward two
7 Federal wildlife proposals. One on wolf, one on
8 customary and traditional use for deer.

9

10 Do any other Council members have any
11 other proposals, potential proposals we should consider
12 for the call for Federal wildlife proposals.

13

14 Mr. Suminski.

15

16 MR. SUMINSKI: Sorry, Ms. Chairman. I
17 wasn't really clear on that first one, what the
18 direction was with the wolf proposal. Was that
19 something that someone was going to work on tonight as
20 well, or did you want -- I thought you directed DeAnna
21 to work on it, but I'm not sure what -- I just need
22 some clarification. I'm sorry.

23

24 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.
25 Suminski.

26

27 I believe we asked our coordinator to
28 craft the proposal based on our discussion. I had the
29 notes of what I suggested that I was going to hand off
30 to her after I conferred with Mr. Douville, and then
31 that would come back before us to see if we need to
32 refine it or discuss it before we approve it.

33

34 MR. SUMINSKI: Okay, thank you, Ms.
35 Chair. I just heard two different proposals there.
36 One just up to 30 percent and then the sliding scale
37 one so I just -- but if that's in the works, that's
38 fine.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Are there any
43 other potential proposals for the call for Federal
44 wildlife proposals that the Council wishes to put
45 forward at this time.

46

47 MS. PHILLIPS: Madame Chair.

48

49 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Ms. Phillips.

50

1 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Does it take
2 a proposal to close POW to non-Federally-qualified
3 hunters for deer?
4

5 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Ms. Hardin, were
6 you going to come up and answer that.
7

8 MS. HARDIN: Through the Chair.
9 Depending -- Yes. You can submit a proposal to close
10 Prince of Wales to non-Federally-qualified users for
11 the hunting of deer. That, as you know, the regulatory
12 process, if the Board adopted that proposal it wouldn't
13 take effect for some time, so if the question is
14 related to more immediate closure then that could be
15 potentially -- you could make a request to the Board to
16 initiate that closure temporarily through a special
17 action request. So it depends on what the timing is
18 you're looking at.
19

20 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Ms.
21 Hardin.
22

23 Patty, did you have more on that topic
24 that you wanted to put forth for the Council to
25 consider if we want to put a proposal in?
26

27 MS. PHILLIPS: Well, Madame Chairman,
28 what I've heard today through public testimony is that
29 subsistence needs are not being met and that there has
30 been overharvest of the resource -- of the deer
31 resource and that could create a conservation concern
32 and one solution offered was to close the island off to
33 non-Federally-qualified and that would allow Federally-
34 qualified the opportunity to meet their subsistence
35 needs. And I'd like to see it both in a special action
36 and in a proposal format.
37

38 I don't know how the rest of the
39 Council is -- if the rest of the Council is willing to
40 go that far but I think it's needed until you can get a
41 handle on the wolf predation.
42

43 Thank you.
44

45 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Ms.
46 Phillips.
47

48 Mr. Bangs.
49
50

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Madame
2 Chair.

3
4 I was wondering if a first step might
5 be to reduce the bag limit for non-Federally-qualified
6 residents so we don't just slam the door, but, yet,
7 reduce their take. I don't know if that's a
8 possibility or not. But that's, I think, another
9 option.

10
11 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.
12 Bangs.

13
14 Mr. Douville.

15
16 MR. DOUVILLE: I believe Mr. Nickerson
17 had a proposal that addressed that but I wasn't sure if
18 it was addressed to the Board of Game or it would be
19 addressed to the Regional Advisory Council, but it did
20 -- his reduction would be three instead of four. And I
21 would be in a favor of a reduction rather than the door
22 closing, myself, until, you know, it could raise back
23 up if things get better, you know, I mean.

24
25 MS. PHILLIPS: Madame Chair.

26
27 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.
28 Douville.

29
30 Patty, one moment.

31
32 If it pleases the Council I can give
33 you the information for the proposal that Mr. Nickerson
34 put forward, if that helps.

35
36 (Council nods affirmatively)

37
38 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: The Klawock
39 Cooperative Association is putting forward a proposal
40 to change Federal regulations and it was:

41
42 How should the regulation read:

43
44 Customary and traditional use
45 determination, Unit 2 residents only. Harvest limits:
46 Five deer -- wait, this wasn't the right one, was it.

47
48 (Pause)

49
50

1 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Sorry, bear with
2 me.

3
4 (Pause)

5
6 MS. PHILLIPS: I think it is the right
7 one.

8
9 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Go ahead, Ms.
10 Phillips.

11
12 MS. PHILLIPS: Well, it currently is
13 residents of Units 1A, 2 and 3, five deer, so if you'd
14 be reducing it down to residents of Unit 2, then it is
15 a proposal format. But I'm willing to reduce the
16 harvest number, but that's still -- but not -- but that
17 would be reducing the harvest number on Federally-
18 qualified; is that what they're saying, Don and Mike --
19 I mean not Don and Mike, I mean Mike and Mike.

20
21 (Laughter)

22
23 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Ms.
24 Phillips.

25
26 The Klawock proposal, so Klawock
27 Cooperative Association is putting forward a proposal
28 to -- for the Federal wildlife proposal, and their
29 proposal was having a harvest limit for residents of
30 Units 1A and Unit 3 be three deer. So that was the
31 reduction. Is that what you -- Mike and Mike, is that
32 what you guys had intended, I mean would you rather
33 support that than putting forward our own proposal.

34
35 Mr. Douville.

36
37 MR. DOUVILLE: I would not. Because
38 you would be restricting rural users in those areas.
39 First you would have to look at restricting non-rural
40 users. And I think that's where the focus, if we
41 address it, should be.

42
43 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.
44 Douville.

45
46 Mr. Bangs.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Madame
49 Chair. I agree with Mike.

50

1 I think what we need to do is reduce
2 the bag limit for non-Federally-qualified users, so I
3 think that would, at least, address the problem. And
4 I'm not sure about the numbers, that would be the will
5 of the Council what we want to reduce it to, or propose
6 to reduce it to.

7
8 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: So the proposal
9 that we're considering is to reduce the bag limit on
10 Prince of Wales Island to non-Federally-qualified users
11 for deer and we need a number, what would we reduce it
12 to?

13
14 MS. PHILLIPS: Madame Chair.

15
16 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Yes, Ms.
17 Phillips.

18
19 MS. PHILLIPS: Is that a State proposal
20 one, because I didn't know that we could do that?

21
22 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Ms.
23 Phillips. I believe Ms. Hardin said that we could do
24 it on Federal lands; is that correct? No, she's coming
25 up to clarify.

26
27 Ms. Hardin.

28
29 MS. HARDIN: Through the Chair. I
30 actually didn't address that question. This is a very
31 interesting question. I think, the solicitor would
32 need to weigh in on this. There's been some discussion
33 about whether the Board has the authority to do that or
34 not, to regulate or to make reductions in harvest
35 limits under State regulations for non-Federally-
36 qualified subsistence users. And I think Terry may
37 have something he may want to add to the discussion.

38
39 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Ms.
40 Hardin. Mr. Suminski, can you enlighten us, please.

41
42 MR. SUMINSKI: Well, I wasn't -- I
43 haven't quite found it yet, but I believe in the last
44 regulatory cycle we did analyze a proposal that'd be
45 similar to that where they asked to reduce the State
46 bag limit and I believe it was from Craig Tribal but
47 give me a couple minutes and I might be able to pull it
48 up to see what it was.

49
50

1 (Pause)

2
3 MR. SUMINSKI: Ms. Needham. Yeah, it
4 was -- just a second -- it was Proposal 16-01 was
5 submitted by the Craig Tribal Association. It
6 requested limiting non-Federally-qualified subsistence
7 users to the harvest of two deer from Federal public
8 lands in Unit 2 and extending the Unit 2 deer season
9 ending date from December 31 to January 31st.

10
11 The Board accepted the January season,
12 part of that proposal, but did not accept the reducing
13 the State bag limit.

14
15 And that was just the last wildlife
16 cycle, just for your information.

17
18 I'm not sure about the justification
19 here.

20
21 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Ms. Hardin, did
22 you want to say something while Mr. Suminski is looking
23 up the next piece of -- or were you done?

24
25 MR. SUMINSKI: Oh. Yeah, that's all I
26 had unless you wanted the justification.

27
28 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.

29
30 MR. SUMINSKI: Yeah, I'll just read the
31 justification for the limit part. It says although the
32 interpretation of Title VIII of ANILCA could allow the
33 Board to adjust State harvest limits, reducing the
34 harvest limits for non-Federally-qualified users in
35 Unit 2 is allowed under Section .815 of ANILCA is not
36 needed at this time for conservation. Although deer
37 harvest in Unit 2 has been on the increase, the harvest
38 percentage by non-rural users has not increased
39 dramatically from previous levels. Recent increases in
40 deer per hunter as well as the decrease in hunt days
41 per deer for all Unit 2 deer hunters suggests the deer
42 population in Unit 2 is currently stable and growing.

43
44 So -- but that doesn't mean that, you
45 know, you couldn't resubmit the proposal, it's just a
46 little background information.

47
48 Thank you.

49
50

1 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.
2 Suminski.

3
4 Mr. Yeager.

5
6 MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Madame Chair.

7
8 I think probably we've heard different
9 testimony, the difficulty of deer and taking deer on
10 the island from when we first looked at that proposal,
11 so I think we have new information to support this.

12
13 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.
14 Yeager.

15
16 What would we like this proposal to
17 look like, is there somebody that would like to take
18 the lead to craft the language for this proposal in
19 terms of -- and we're talking about close -- well, we
20 originally were talking about closing Prince of Wales
21 to non-Federally-qualified users for deer, however, now
22 the recommendation was to look at reducing the bag
23 limit for non-Federally-qualified users on Prince of
24 Wales for deer.

25
26 Is there anybody that would like to
27 take the lead on crafting a proposal with a number on
28 that so we can move forward.

29
30 Mr. Bangs.

31
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Madame
33 Chair. Yes, I would be willing to do that.

34
35 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you very
36 much.

37
38 Okay. We have three potential wildlife
39 proposals that are going to be crafted and looked at
40 tomorrow for submitting for this call for wildlife
41 proposals. Are there any other proposals that Council
42 members would like to bring forward at this time.

43
44 Mr. Bangs.

45
46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Madame
47 Chair.

48
49 This is a little out of sequence but I
50

1 would like permission from the Council to craft a
2 fisheries proposal that you could review tomorrow, so I
3 could work on it tonight, if that's okay with you, it
4 has to do with non-resident annual bag limit for
5 sockeye salmon.

6
7 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: I think that
8 would be very -- you got your homework cut out for you,
9 thank you.

10
11 Are there any other wildlife proposals
12 that we want to consider at this time.

13
14 Anyone on line.

15
16 MS. PHILLIPS: Madame Chair.

17
18 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Yes, Ms.
19 Phillips.

20
21 MS. PHILLIPS: Well, from the wolf
22 presentation this morning we heard more restrictive
23 dates for subsistence for the harvest of wolf and so if
24 we could submit a proposal that changes the hunting
25 season to match the earlier State season for -- what
26 was it, it was -- oh, I forget which one it was -- is
27 Mr. Reeves there, he knows which one I was talking
28 about.

29
30 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Ms. Phillips, on
31 Table 2 it was the second one, is that what you're
32 saying, Mr. Schroeder.

33
34 MR. SCHROEDER: Ms. Phillips. I think
35 that was for Unit 2, the State hunting season is listed
36 as December 1 to March 31st and the Federal hunting
37 season is listed as September 1 to March 31st. Is that
38 the one you're thinking of.

39
40 Over.

41
42 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah, I think so. I was
43 looking at the wrong one, so, yeah, if we could submit
44 a proposal to match that, for them to match up.

45
46 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: So the idea is
47 to align the State and Federal hunt seasons for Unit 2,
48 wolf.

49
50

1 (No comments)

2

3

4 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: So Ms. Phillips
5 brought forth that proposal idea, how does the Council
6 feel about submitting that as a proposal.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Is there support
11 to move that proposal forward in the call of proposals
12 or is there any other discussion.

13

14 Mr. Douville.

15

16 MR. DOUVILLE: So you would be changing
17 the Federal hunting season from September 1/March 31 to
18 the State hunting season which is December 1 to March
19 31; is that what you're doing?

20

21 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: I think it was
22 unclear and that is what Mr. Schroeder suggested Ms.
23 Phillips was talking about but, Patty, did you -- did
24 you see that table and is that what you were putting
25 forward?

26

27 MS. PHILLIPS: I can't find Mr. Reeves'
28 report right now. Is it the one that was emailed to
29 us, oh, I know where it was, excuse me. Hang on.

30

31 (Pause)

32

33 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Douville.

34

35 MR. DOUVILLE: Both of the Federal
36 trapping and the Federal hunting seasons are more
37 liberal than what the State offers in Unit 2 at this
38 time.

39

40 MS. PHILLIPS: Okay. Madame Chair.

41

42 So the Federal hunt is September 1 to
43 December -- okay, to March 31st, for Unit 2 and the
44 State is December 1, I don't know where I saw that --
45 oh, here it is -- oh. Well, I guess they're not
46 restrictive, I was looking at them wrong, so,
47 disregard, sorry.

48

49 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Reeves, did

50

1 you have what you think she's trying to get at?

2

3 MR. REEVES: Yeah, Madame Chair. Ms.
4 Phillips. I believe what Ms. Phillips was referring to
5 earlier is that there's a portion of Unit 1 and in Unit
6 3 under the State hunting regs that the season is
7 actually longer than the Federal subsistence hunting
8 season. Mr. Scott kind of notified me that that was
9 changed, I guess due to some intensive management, so
10 possibly someone from the State might be able to
11 further explain that if the Council needs. But my
12 guess is that's probably what Ms. Phillips was
13 referring to.

14

15 And then I guess if there's a need from
16 the Federal side, that that needs to be changed, since
17 opportunity potentially still exists under the State
18 regs.

19

20 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes, Madame Chair.

21

22 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Yes, Ms.
23 Phillips.

24

25 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you for bringing
26 Jeff forward, yeah, now he's enlightened me.

27

28 We are more restrictive in the hunt for
29 Unit 1 and Unit 2 and more restrictive in the trap in
30 Units 1 and -- yeah. For the trapping it's November --
31 for the State it's November 1 to April 30th, for the
32 Federal it's November 10th to April 30th, so where
33 we're more restrictive it should match up to be as
34 liberal as the State's.

35

36 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Okay. I think
37 we're all on the same page now, we have some shakings
38 of the head. So does the Council wish to put forward a
39 proposal to align the State and Federal trapping
40 seasons to extend the Federal trapping season starting
41 November 1st in Unit 1 for wolf, 1, 3 and 5 -- for
42 Units 1, 3 and 5.

43

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: I guess I should
48 ask if there's any objection if we craft this proposal
49 to have it put forward for tomorrow to vote on for the

50

1 call for proposals.

2

3

Is there an objection to this.

4

5

Mr. Douville.

6

7

8

MR. DOUVILLE: Madame Chair. I would
be in favor of doing that, I think that would be fine.

9

10

11

ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you. Can
we direct someone to craft that proposal for us.

12

13

14

MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Reeves did.

15

16

17

ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Is there anyone
that wants to volunteer putting it together.

18

19

(No comments)

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Ms. Phillips did
you -- oh, Mr. Yeager is volunteering. I was almost
going to have Ms. Phillips see if she could email it to
us but I know she has that Hughes network that's really
slow, so, Mr. Yeager, if you could craft that for us
for tomorrow, the language for that that would be
great.

27

28

29

MR. YEAGER: (Nods affirmatively)

30

31

32

33

34

ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you. All
right, we have four proposals that are going to be
looked at tomorrow for submitting. Are there any other
proposal ideas from the Council for Federal wildlife
regulations.

35

36

37

(No comments)

38

39

40

41

ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Any Council
members on line that have a proposal for the Federal
call for wildlife proposals.

42

43

44

(No comments)

45

46

47

ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: All right. We
will take a look at those. Thank you to those that are
going to be crafting those proposals. We have four
that we'll try to put forward for that.

48

49

50

Mr. Suminski, did you have anything

1 else on that that you needed at this time.

2

3 MR. SUMINSKI: No, Madame Chair, that's
4 all.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: All right, thank
9 you.

10

11 At this time I guess we will recess
12 until 9:00 a.m., tomorrow morning.

13

14 (Off record)

15

16 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

17

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